



Priory Junior School

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

2026/27

Policy owner	Headteacher / Governing Body
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School	Priory Junior School, Priory Road, Gedling, Nottingham, NG4 3LE

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1. Purpose, scope and aims

This policy explains how Priory Junior School will use suspension and permanent exclusion lawfully, fairly and proportionately. It applies to all pupils on the school roll and should be read alongside the school's Promoting Positive Relationships and Supporting Behaviour Regulation Policy, Child Protection Policy, Child-on-Child Abuse Policy, SEND Policy, Attendance Policy and Equality Policy.

At Priory Junior School, our relational and restorative approach is underpinned by our PRIDE values. We seek to understand behaviour in context, respond to unmet needs, teach regulation and repair relationships. Suspension is available when necessary to maintain a calm, safe and supportive environment; permanent exclusion is reserved for the most serious circumstances and is a last resort.

- apply the statutory process consistently, transparently and without discrimination;
- ensure decisions are lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate;
- protect the education, welfare and safety of the pupil concerned, other pupils and staff;
- ensure pupils are listened to and supported to express their views;
- use early intervention, reasonable adjustments and appropriate multi-agency support to reduce the need for exclusion;
- avoid unlawful informal exclusion and off-rolling;
- ensure education continues during suspension or permanent exclusion; and
- support successful reintegration and a genuine fresh start.

2. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has been prepared with 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, effective from 26 July 2026.

Current statutory guidance: [DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance \(July 2026\)](#)

The main legislation and guidance includes:

- Education Act 2002, including section 51A;
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended;
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including duties concerning education and parental responsibility during exclusion;
- Education Act 1996, including section 19 and the definition of a school day;
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended;
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024;
- Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- Children and Families Act 2014 and the SEND Code of Practice;
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026;
- Behaviour in Schools guidance and Working Together to Improve School Attendance; and
- Arranging Alternative Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools.

3. Definitions and important distinctions

Term	Meaning
Suspension	A disciplinary exclusion for a fixed period. It may be for one or more fixed periods, including part of a school day, but cannot be open-ended.
Permanent exclusion	A disciplinary exclusion where the pupil is no longer allowed to attend the school, unless reinstated through the statutory process.
Off-site direction	A temporary requirement for a pupil to attend another education setting to improve future behaviour. It is not a punishment for past misconduct.
Managed move	A voluntary, planned process leading to a permanent transfer to another mainstream school, agreed by all parties and only where it is in the pupil's best interests.
Safeguarding separation	A rare, temporary arrangement to keep pupils physically apart for safeguarding reasons. It is not a disciplinary exclusion.
Parent	A person with parental responsibility and any person who has care of the child.
Governing board	For Priory while it is a maintained community school, the Governing Body or a properly delegated committee acting within the statutory framework.

A pupil will not be suspended or permanently excluded for a non-disciplinary reason, including because the school feels unable to meet SEND, because of poor academic performance, or because a parent does not attend a meeting. Sending a pupil home, or preventing attendance, for disciplinary reasons must be formally recorded and processed as a suspension or permanent exclusion.

4. Priory's approach: prevention, support and proportionality

Priory's behaviour approach is relational, restorative and trauma-informed. We understand that behaviour can communicate an unmet need and that pupils may require co-regulation, reasonable adjustments, targeted teaching or additional support. Our first response is normally to teach, regulate, restore and repair, while maintaining clear boundaries and protecting the safety and learning of others.

Before suspension or permanent exclusion is considered, the school will normally review what support has been provided and whether further appropriate support could reduce the risk of recurrence. Depending on need and seriousness, this may include:

- co-regulation, PACE, Zones of Regulation and restorative reflection;
- communication with parents and a supporting behaviour regulation plan;
- ELSA, CASY, The Nurturing Den, trusted-adult or mentoring support;
- SENCO review, reasonable adjustments, additional teaching or pastoral support;
- early help/family support, GAPS or other local/multi-agency involvement;
- risk assessment, safety planning and child-on-child safeguarding responses;
- an early review of an EHC plan where appropriate;
- off-site direction or a voluntary managed move where lawful and in the pupil's best interests.

The seriousness of an incident may mean that suspension or permanent exclusion is appropriate without all previous interventions having been tried. A single exceptionally serious incident can justify permanent exclusion where the statutory test is met.

5. Decision-making by the Headteacher

Only the Headteacher, or the person formally appointed as Acting Headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. The decision may relate to behaviour in school or behaviour outside school where the school's behaviour policy applies.

Before making a decision, the Headteacher will:

- establish the facts on the civil standard of proof: on the balance of probabilities;
- consider all relevant evidence and circumstances, including any contributing factors and whether provocation or vulnerability is relevant;
- give the pupil an opportunity to explain their version of events unless it would be inappropriate to do so, and support them to express their views where needed;
- consider the pupil's age, understanding, SEND, disability, health needs, social care involvement, looked-after or previously looked-after status and any safeguarding information;
- consider whether the decision would comply with the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable-adjustment duties and the Public Sector Equality Duty;
- consider whether the proposed response is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate; and
- consider whether appropriate alternatives or additional support would be effective, while recognising that exclusion can be necessary to protect safety, welfare and education.

Balance of probabilities: The Headteacher does not apply the criminal standard of proof. A fact may be treated as established where it is more likely than not to have occurred.

6. Suspension

A suspension is an essential behaviour-management tool and may be used to provide a clear signal that behaviour is unacceptable or that continuing behaviour may place a pupil at risk of permanent exclusion. It may also be necessary following a serious one-off incident.

- A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year.
- A suspension does not have to be continuous.
- A suspension may be for part of a school day. A lunchtime suspension counts as half a school day for statutory purposes.
- Any time a pupil is sent home for disciplinary reasons, including where work is provided online, must be formally recorded as a suspension.
- The law does not allow a suspension simply to be extended or "converted" into permanent exclusion. If further evidence justifies another decision, a new suspension or permanent exclusion may begin after the first suspension ends and must be separately notified and recorded.
- If suspensions are becoming regular, the school will review whether suspension alone is effective and what additional strategies or support are needed.

Examples of circumstances that may warrant suspension include serious physical aggression, assault, threatening or abusive behaviour, bullying, discriminatory abuse, serious child-on-child abuse, significant damage or vandalism, serious defiance presenting a safety risk, possession/use of a prohibited or offensive item, or other serious/persistent breaches of the Behaviour Regulation Policy. This list is illustrative and not exhaustive.

7. Permanent exclusion

Permanent exclusion is the most serious disciplinary sanction and will be used only where the Headteacher concludes that the statutory test is met. A decision to permanently exclude should 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, including staff or pupils.

Permanent exclusion will normally follow a review of support, interventions and alternatives. However, a single exceptionally serious incident may meet the statutory test. The school will not operate a "no exclusion" approach where doing so would create unreasonable risks or safeguarding concerns.

8. Safeguarding separation: not a disciplinary exclusion

New clarification in the July 2026 guidance: In rare safeguarding circumstances, a school may temporarily forbid a pupil from attending the premises in order to keep pupils physically apart, for example following an allegation of harm by one pupil against another. This is not an exclusion on disciplinary grounds.

Any decision to separate pupils for safeguarding purposes will be made case by case, led by the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) with the Headteacher and supported by children's social care, police or other agencies as required. The school will:

- use the arrangement only where separation is essential and cannot practicably be achieved while keeping all affected pupils on site;
- inform parents of the reason for the temporary arrangement;
- notify the Governing Body without delay;
- consider duties under the Human Rights Act 1998, Equality Act 2010 and KCSIE;
- ensure education is arranged; where neither the school nor parent arranges it, the Local Authority has a section 19 duty;
- complete and review safeguarding risk/needs assessments where appropriate; and
- plan reintegration and review the arrangement frequently so it lasts no longer than necessary.

Safeguarding separation must not be used to avoid the statutory exclusion process where the real reason for keeping a pupil away from school is disciplinary.

9. Preventative measures, off-site direction and managed moves

9.1 Off-site direction

Where in-school interventions or outreach have not been successful or are inappropriate, the Governing Body may consider a temporary off-site direction to alternative provision or another mainstream school to improve the pupil's future behaviour. It is not a sanction for past misconduct.

- The pupil's needs, including SEND and health needs, will inform the placement.
- The purpose, objectives, planned maximum duration and review arrangements will be clear from the outset.
- Parents and, where applicable, the Local Authority for a pupil with an EHC plan will receive the statutory information and be involved in reviews.
- The pupil will be supported to share their views and be told how those views have been taken into account.
- Reviews will be recorded and frequent enough to confirm that the placement remains suitable and is achieving its objectives.
- Relevant attainment, safeguarding, risk assessment and support information will be shared securely before the placement begins.

9.2 Managed moves

A managed move is a planned route to a permanent transfer to another mainstream school. It must be voluntary, agreed by all parties, and in the pupil's best interests. The school will not pressure parents to accept a managed move and will not use refusal of a managed move as a reason for permanent exclusion.

- There is no lawful "trial managed move". A temporary move to improve behaviour should be arranged through off-site direction.
- Where the pupil has an EHC plan, the Local Authority must be involved and statutory processes for amending the plan must be followed.
- Relevant safeguarding, attainment, risk and support information will be shared in advance.
- Where a pupil has a social worker, the social worker and DSL will be involved; for a looked-after child, the Virtual School Head will also be involved.

10. Informing parents and other parties

10.1 Parents

Whenever a pupil is suspended or permanently excluded, the Headteacher will notify parents without delay of the period of suspension or the fact of permanent exclusion and the reason(s). Initial notification should normally be by telephone or in person, followed by the required written notice without delay.

The written notice will include, as applicable:

- reasons and the length of the suspension, or confirmation that the exclusion is permanent;
- parents' right to make representations to the Governing Body and how to do so;
- how the pupil may be involved in the process;
- where a reinstatement meeting is required, the right to attend, be represented at the parent's expense and bring a friend;
- parents' right to request remote access to the meeting and how to make the request;
- arrangements for education, work and alternative provision;
- for compulsory-school-age pupils, the days on which parents must ensure that the child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification; and
- free and impartial sources of advice, including DfE parent guidance, SENDIASS, Coram Child Law Advice and IPSEA where relevant.

The public-place duty normally applies to the first five school days of an exclusion, or until alternative provision starts or the suspension ends if earlier. Parents will be notified of the applicable days no later than the end of the afternoon session on the first day.

10.2 Governing Body and Local Authority

The Headteacher will notify the Governing Body without delay of any permanent exclusion; any suspension/permanent exclusion that takes the pupil's total to more than five school days (or more than ten lunchtimes) in a term; and any exclusion that means the pupil will miss a National Curriculum test. The Governing Body will also receive termly information about other suspensions not previously notified.

Nottinghamshire County Council will be informed without delay of every suspension and permanent exclusion, regardless of length. Where a permanently excluded pupil lives in another local authority area, that home authority will also be informed without delay.

10.3 Social workers, Virtual School Head and EHC plan duties

Where a pupil has a social worker, the Headteacher will notify the social worker without delay after a suspension or permanent exclusion. Where a pupil is looked after, the relevant Virtual School Head will also be notified without delay. They will be invited to relevant Governing Body meetings and may contribute information about safeguarding, welfare, background and support needs.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the school will liaise with the Local Authority at an early stage where behaviour is causing concern and will consider whether an early annual review or alternative support/provision is required.

11. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

Education must continue during exclusion. During the first five school days, where the pupil is not attending alternative provision, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark accessible, achievable work. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with SEND or disabilities.

For a suspension lasting more than five school days, the Governing Body must arrange suitable full-time education from no later than the sixth school day. Consecutive suspensions are cumulative for this purpose. For a permanent exclusion, the Local Authority must arrange suitable full-time education from no later than the sixth school day after the first day of permanent exclusion.

For a looked-after child or a child with a social worker, Priory and the Local Authority should work together to arrange suitable alternative provision from the first day following suspension or permanent exclusion wherever possible. For a looked-after child, immediate suitable education should be reflected in the Personal Education Plan.

Information about alternative provision will be given to parents in accordance with statutory timescales, including start date, session times, address and reporting arrangements.

12. Governing Body consideration and reinstatement

The Governing Body will consider parental representations and, where legally required, convene a meeting to consider whether the pupil should be reinstated. A properly delegated committee of at least three governors may carry out this function.

Circumstance	Governing Body duty
Permanent exclusion	Meet and consider reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice.
Total exclusion exceeds 15 school days in a term	Meet and consider reinstatement within 15 school days. This includes totals such as 15.5 days.

Pupil will miss a National Curriculum test	Meet within 15 school days and take reasonable steps to meet before the test. For a maintained school, if this is impracticable, the Chair (or Vice-Chair) may consider reinstatement alone.
Total is more than 5 but no more than 15 school days in a term	If parents make representations, meet and consider reinstatement within 50 school days. If parents do not make representations, no meeting is required.
Total is 5 school days or fewer in a term	Consider any parental representations, but no meeting is required and the Governing Body has no power to direct reinstatement.

Where a meeting is held, parents, the pupil where appropriate, the Headteacher, the Local Authority representative, and where relevant the pupil's social worker and Virtual School Head may attend and make representations/share information. Parents and the pupil may be accompanied by a friend or representative. Written evidence will, where possible, be circulated to all parties at least five school days in advance.

The Governing Body will consider whether the Headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, taking account of the welfare and safeguarding of the pupil and peers, relevant legal duties and all evidence presented. The civil standard of proof applies. It may decline to reinstate or direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date where it has the power to do so.

Clear minutes will record the evidence considered and reasons for the decision. The outcome will be notified in writing and without delay to the required parties and placed on the pupil's educational record.

13. Independent Review Panel following permanent exclusion

If the Governing Body decides not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, parents have the right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP). While Priory is a maintained school, the IRP is arranged by the Local Authority.

- An application must normally be made within 15 school days of the written Governing Body decision not to reinstate. A later 15-school-day window applies following the final determination of a relevant discrimination claim where the statutory conditions are met.
- Parents may request a remote hearing and may be represented or bring a friend.
- Parents have the right to require the arranging authority to appoint a SEN expert, regardless of whether the pupil has recognised SEN, at no cost to the parent.
- The IRP cannot directly reinstate the pupil. It may uphold the Governing Body decision, recommend that the Governing Body reconsiders, or quash the decision and direct reconsideration where the decision is flawed on judicial review principles.
- If directed or recommended to reconsider, the Governing Body will do so within the statutory timescale and issue a fresh written decision.

Parents who believe a permanent exclusion involved unlawful discrimination may also have a right to make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability) for disability discrimination, or to the County Court for other discrimination.

14. Remote access to meetings

Parents may request remote access for a Governing Body reinstatement meeting or an IRP. Face-to-face meetings should be encouraged and remote meetings are not the default. A remote meeting will only be used where the relevant decision-maker is satisfied that all parties can participate effectively, hear and be heard (and, where video is used, see and be seen), and that the meeting will remain fair and transparent.

Social workers and Virtual School Heads must be allowed to participate remotely in a Governing Body meeting or IRP where the required participation and fairness conditions are met, regardless of the format chosen for other participants.

15. Reintegration and a fresh start

Priory will support pupils to reintegrate successfully following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction or safeguarding separation. Reintegration is consistent with our relational and restorative ethos: the pupil remains a valued member of the school community and previous behaviour will not be treated as an obstacle to future success.

A reintegration strategy will be communicated before or at the beginning of the pupil's return and will normally be discussed at a reintegration meeting with the pupil and parent. A pupil will not be prevented from returning to class because a parent is unable or unwilling to attend the meeting.

- a restorative conversation focused on regulation, repair, impact and next steps;
- a clear welcome back and a trusted adult/check-in arrangement;
- review of triggers, SEND, health, safeguarding and unmet needs;
- reasonable adjustments and a Supporting Behaviour Regulation Plan where appropriate;
- planned pastoral intervention, ELSA/CASY/Nurturing Den or external support where appropriate;
- academic support to address learning missed during suspension;

- clear, achievable expectations and recognition of progress; and
- regular review with the pupil and parents, adapting the plan as needed.

A part-time timetable will not be used to manage behaviour. If one is exceptionally required for another lawful reason, it will be time-limited, regularly reviewed, have a clear route back to full-time education and be recorded correctly as authorised absence.

16. Cancellation of an exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion that has begun, or has not yet begun, only before the Governing Body has met to consider reinstatement. If an exclusion is cancelled:

- parents, the Governing Body, Local Authority and, where relevant, the social worker and Virtual School Head will be notified without delay and given the reason;
- any Governing Body duty to consider reinstatement for that exclusion ceases;
- parents will be offered a meeting with the Headteacher to discuss the circumstances;
- the pupil will be allowed to return without delay; and
- days already spent out of school count towards the maximum 45 school days in the academic year.

A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled where the statutory 45-day limit would be exceeded by the time the cancellation takes effect.

17. Records, attendance and safeguarding information

Priory will maintain accurate records of decisions, reasons, evidence, notifications, pupil views, work provided, alternative provision, support, Governing Body consideration and outcomes. Serious behaviour incidents and support may also be recorded on CPOMS in line with the Behaviour Regulation and safeguarding procedures. Statutory suspension/permanent exclusion data will be recorded through the school's management information and census processes.

- The school will monitor the 45-school-day annual maximum, including relevant suspensions received at other schools.
- Whilst a permanently excluded pupil remains on Priory's admission register, the appropriate attendance code will be used. Where no alternative provision is attended, Code E is used; where the pupil attends another registered educational establishment, Code D may apply; Code B may apply to qualifying off-site educational activity.
- A permanently excluded pupil's name will not be deleted from the admission register until the statutory conditions are met, including expiry of the IRP application period or completion/abandonment of the review and any required reconsideration.
- Once a permanently excluded pupil transfers to a new school, the Common Transfer File will be sent in accordance with statutory requirements.
- The DSL will transfer the child protection file securely and separately from the main pupil file as soon as possible and within the safeguarding timescales in the school's Child Protection Policy, with confirmation of receipt.

18. Equality, SEND and vulnerable pupils

Priory recognises national and local disproportionality in exclusion rates and will scrutinise its own decisions and data. The Equality Act 2010 applies to both disciplinary sanctions and the exclusion process. The school will make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils and must not use practices that unfairly increase a pupil's risk of exclusion.

Where a pupil with SEN, a disability or an EHC plan is at risk of exclusion, the school will proactively engage with parents and consider whether additional support, different reasonable adjustments or alternative provision is required. For a pupil with an EHC plan, Priory will contact the Local Authority at an early stage and consider requesting an early annual review.

For pupils with a social worker, looked-after pupils and previously looked-after pupils, the school will involve the relevant professionals early, consider safeguarding and trauma/adversity, and review whether existing plans and support are sufficiently meeting need.

19. Monitoring, governance and review

The Governing Body will review, challenge and evaluate the school's use of suspension, permanent exclusion, off-site direction, managed moves, safeguarding separation and other pupil movement. It will consider repeat suspensions, interventions, timing, reasons, characteristics of pupils affected, SEND patterns, attendance and whether off-site arrangements are delivering suitable education and improved outcomes.

The Headteacher will report relevant data and learning to governors while respecting confidentiality. Any themes identified will inform the Behaviour Regulation Policy, SEND provision, safeguarding arrangements, staff training and pastoral support.

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner where legislation, DfE guidance, local arrangements or the school's legal status changes. Priory Junior School is currently a maintained community school; if its legal status changes, governance and Independent Review Panel arrangements will be updated promptly.

Appendix 1 - Statutory thresholds at a glance

Situation	Who must be told / action	Key timescale
Any suspension or permanent exclusion	Parents; Local Authority; social worker if the pupil has one; VSH if looked after. Governing Body in specified cases.	Without delay
Compulsory-school-age pupil excluded	Parent public-place duty notice.	Without delay and no later than end of afternoon session on day 1
Suspension >5 consecutive school days	Suitable full-time alternative provision arranged by Governing Body.	No later than school day 6
Permanent exclusion	Suitable full-time education arranged by Local Authority.	No later than school day 6
Permanent exclusion / >15 days in term / misses NC test	Governing Body meeting to consider reinstatement.	Within 15 school days
More than 5, up to 15 days in term + parental representations	Governing Body meeting to consider reinstatement.	Within 50 school days
Permanent exclusion not reinstated	Parent may apply for Independent Review Panel.	Normally within 15 school days of written Governing Body decision
IRP recommends/directs reconsideration	Governing Body reconsiders and issues fresh decision.	Statutory reconsideration timescale applies

Appendix 2 - Priory reintegration framework

The reintegration discussion should be proportionate and supportive. It should focus on helping the pupil return safely, successfully and with dignity, rather than re-punishing the pupil for the incident.

Area	Questions / actions to consider
Welcome and belonging	Who will welcome the pupil? Which trusted adult will check in? What will help the pupil feel that this is a genuine fresh start?
Pupil voice	What does the pupil think happened? What did they need at the time? What would help next time?
Repair	Who was affected? Is a restorative conversation, apology, repair or other action appropriate and safe?
Regulation	What are the pupil's triggers, early signs and successful co-regulation strategies? Which Zones/PACE approaches help?
SEND / health	Are reasonable adjustments or SENCO/health reviews required? Does an EHC plan or support plan need review?
Safeguarding	Is a risk or needs assessment required? Are there child-on-child, exploitation, home or contextual safeguarding concerns?
Learning	What work was completed? What learning was missed? What catch-up is needed?
Support	ELSA, CASY, Nurturing Den, mentoring, family help, external agencies, social worker or VSH involvement?
Review	Set clear, achievable goals and a date to review progress with pupil and parent.

Appendix 3 - Headteacher decision checklist

Before confirming a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Headteacher/Acting Headteacher should be able to evidence the following:

- The decision is on disciplinary grounds and the school is using the correct statutory process.
- The facts have been established on the balance of probabilities and relevant evidence has been considered.
- The pupil has been given an appropriate opportunity to express their views and those views have been considered.
- Any contributing factors, safeguarding information, provocation or vulnerability have been considered.
- SEND, disability, health needs and reasonable adjustments have been considered; where appropriate the SENCO/Local Authority has been involved.
- Social worker/VSH/Designated Teacher involvement has been considered where relevant.
- The Behaviour Regulation Policy has been applied fairly and consistently, while allowing for lawful individual adjustments.
- The decision is lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate.
- Permanent exclusion meets both limbs of the statutory test.
- Parents and statutory parties will be notified without delay using the correct notice.
- Education/work and any alternative provision are arranged within the required timescales.
- The exclusion is recorded accurately and the 45-day annual maximum is monitored.
- A reintegration strategy is planned for the pupil's return following suspension.