

ADAMSRILL PRIMARY SCHOOL



Suspension and permanent exclusion policy 2026-27

Approved by:	Dr Increase Esoe	Date: September 2026
Approved by:	Mrs Shirley Hamilton	Date: September 2026
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1. Purpose and status

This policy sets out Adamsrill Primary School's approach to suspensions and permanent exclusions on disciplinary grounds. It must be read alongside the school's Behaviour Policy, Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy, SEND Policy, Equality Policy, Attendance Policy and relevant local authority procedures.

The policy reflects the Department for Education (DfE) statutory guidance Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, effective from 26 July 2026. Where legislation or statutory guidance changes during the life of this policy, the school will follow the law and current statutory guidance.

Adamsrill is committed to a calm, safe, supportive and inclusive environment. Suspension is an important behaviour-management tool where appropriate. Permanent exclusion is a serious decision and will only be used where the statutory test is met. No pupil will be informally or unlawfully excluded.

2. Legal and statutory framework

This policy has regard to, among other relevant legislation and guidance:

- Education Act 2002, including section 51A and section 29A where applicable
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, including duties relating to education during exclusion
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012, as amended
- Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2010, as amended, including the 2026 legislative changes
- School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014 and SEND Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years
- Human Rights Act 1998
- DfE Behaviour in Schools guidance
- DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance effective 26 July 2026
- DfE Working Together to Improve School Attendance
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- DfE Arranging Alternative Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools.

3. Key principles

- Only the Headteacher may suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds. In the Headteacher's absence, an acting headteacher lawfully carrying out that function may take the decision.
- Decisions will be lawful, rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate, and will be made on the balance of probabilities.
- The Headteacher will consider the individual circumstances of each case, including relevant contributing factors, safeguarding information, SEND, disability and other vulnerabilities.
- The school will take reasonable steps to enable and encourage the pupil to give their views, taking account of age and understanding, unless it would be inappropriate to do so.
- The school will comply with the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils.
- A pupil will not be suspended or permanently excluded simply because the school considers their SEND or disability difficult to meet.

- The school will not use informal or unofficial exclusions, including sending a pupil home to cool off, placing a pupil on a part-time timetable for behavioural reasons, or pressuring a family to electively home educate.
- Safeguarding will remain central throughout. Where a pupil has a social worker, is looked after, or has other identified vulnerabilities, relevant professionals will be involved as required.

4. Suspension

A suspension is a temporary removal from school on disciplinary grounds for a fixed period. A pupil may be suspended for one or more fixed periods up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year. Suspensions may be discontinuous and may include part-days; a part-day counts as a half school day for statutory purposes.

A suspension may be used where it is an appropriate and proportionate response to unacceptable behaviour and where the school considers that removal from school for a defined period is necessary. The length will be no longer than is necessary to achieve a legitimate disciplinary purpose.

The school will maintain a reliable record of days of suspension, including suspensions imposed by another school during the same academic year where this information is known, to ensure the 45-day statutory maximum is not exceeded.

5. Permanent exclusion

A permanent exclusion means that a pupil is no longer allowed to attend the school unless reinstated. The Headteacher will only permanently exclude a pupil where both limbs of the statutory test are satisfied:

- there has been a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's Behaviour Policy; and
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others, such as staff or pupils.

Permanent exclusion will sometimes be necessary as a last resort to maintain a calm, safe and supportive environment. The Headteacher will consider relevant evidence, interventions and the pupil's individual circumstances before reaching the decision.

6. Reasons and evidence

The Headteacher will use professional judgement in the individual case. Examples of circumstances that may warrant suspension or permanent exclusion include, but are not limited to:

- physical assault against a pupil
- physical assault against an adult
- verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil
- verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult
- use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
- bullying
- racist abuse
- abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment
- abuse relating to disability
- sexual misconduct
- drug- or alcohol-related incidents
- damage, theft, persistent disruptive behaviour, or serious misuse of online technology where relevant to the school's Behaviour Policy.

The list is illustrative, not exhaustive. Behaviour outside school may be considered where the school's Behaviour Policy applies. The Headteacher will establish the facts on the balance of probabilities and consider all relevant evidence, including the pupil's account.

7. SEND, disability, equality and vulnerable pupils

Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude, the Headteacher will consider whether a pupil's SEND, disability, communication needs, trauma, mental health, safeguarding circumstances or other vulnerability may be relevant to the behaviour and decision. This does not prevent lawful disciplinary action, but it informs whether the response is fair and proportionate.

- Reasonable adjustments will be considered and made where required by the Equality Act 2010.
- For pupils with SEND, the school will use its best endeavours to secure appropriate provision and will consider whether additional or different support is needed.
- For a pupil with an EHC plan, the school will work with the local authority and may request an early review where current provision or placement may no longer be appropriate.
- For looked-after children and pupils previously looked after, the Designated Teacher and Virtual School Head will be involved as appropriate.
- Where a pupil has a social worker, the social worker will be involved as early as possible where suspension or permanent exclusion is being considered.

8. Safeguarding and keeping pupils apart

Suspension and permanent exclusion are disciplinary measures. They must not be used simply to manage a safeguarding situation where no disciplinary decision has been made.

In certain circumstances, it may be necessary temporarily to prevent a pupil from attending the school premises in order to keep pupils apart for safeguarding purposes, for example following an allegation of harm by one pupil against another. Such an arrangement is not a disciplinary exclusion. The school will follow safeguarding procedures, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 and the DfE exclusion guidance, and will ensure that education is arranged in accordance with the applicable legal duties. The arrangement will be kept under regular review, with the child's best interests central to decision-making.

9. Preventative support, alternative provision and pupil movement

The school will seek to identify and address underlying causes of poor behaviour. Depending on need and circumstances, support may include pastoral intervention, mentoring, SEND assessment or review, multi-agency support, behaviour plans, family engagement and appropriate alternative provision.

9.1 Off-site direction

Off-site direction is a temporary placement at another education setting intended to improve future behaviour. It is not a punishment for past misconduct. Where used, Adamsrill and its governing board will comply with the statutory framework effective from 26 July 2026 and have regard to DfE alternative provision guidance. The objectives, proposed duration, education, support and review arrangements will be clearly defined. Relevant information, including attainment, SEND, safeguarding and risk-management information, will be shared appropriately before the placement begins.

The placement will be reviewed at legally required and otherwise sufficient intervals to determine whether it is achieving its objectives and benefiting the pupil. Parents and, where appropriate, the pupil and local authority will be involved in accordance with statutory requirements.

9.2 Managed moves

A managed move is a permanent transfer to another mainstream school. It will only be used where it is voluntary, agreed by all relevant parties and in the pupil's best interests. The school will not use "trial admissions" or a "trial managed move". If a temporary placement is required to improve behaviour, the off-site direction framework will be used.

10. Unlawful exclusion and off-rolling

Adamsrill will not use unlawful exclusion or off-rolling. In particular, the school will not:

- send a pupil home on disciplinary grounds without formally recording a suspension
- place a pupil on a part-time timetable as a disciplinary sanction
- pressure or encourage a parent to remove a pupil from the school roll or electively home educate to avoid suspension or permanent exclusion
- move a pupil to alternative provision where this is not in the pupil's best interests
- remove a pupil from the admission register without satisfying the statutory grounds and procedures.

11. Decision-making process

Before making a decision, the Headteacher will, where relevant and practicable:

1. investigate the incident and gather relevant evidence;
2. allow the pupil to give their account and consider how best to support their participation;
3. consider whether the behaviour policy was breached and the seriousness/context of the behaviour;
4. consider contributing factors, including bullying, bereavement, safeguarding, SEND, disability, mental health and communication needs;
5. consider the support and interventions already provided and whether further support is appropriate;
6. consult the DSL, SENDCO, Designated Teacher, social worker, Virtual School Head, local authority or other professionals where relevant;
7. consider equality duties and reasonable adjustments;
8. decide whether suspension or permanent exclusion is lawful, reasonable and proportionate; and
9. make and retain a clear written record of the decision and reasons.

The law does not permit a suspension to be extended or "converted" into a permanent exclusion. If further evidence emerges, a further suspension or permanent exclusion may be imposed as a separate decision in accordance with statutory guidance.

12. Notification following suspension or permanent exclusion

12.1 Parents/carers

The Headteacher will notify parents without delay of the decision and the reasons. The school will provide the required written information, including the period of any suspension, or that the exclusion is permanent; the reasons; the right to make representations to the governing board; how representations should be made; and relevant rights and duties concerning attendance in public places during the first five school days.

Electronic notification will only be used for statutory notification where the parent has agreed that the relevant electronic address or number may be used for that purpose. The school will provide up-to-date signposting to impartial advice and support.

12.2 Governing board and local authority

The Headteacher will notify the governing board and local authority without delay in the circumstances required by law and statutory guidance. The local authority will be informed of every suspension and permanent exclusion, regardless of length. For a permanently excluded pupil who lives in another local authority, the pupil's home authority will also be informed without delay.

12.3 Social worker and Virtual School Head

Where a pupil has a social worker or is looked after, the Headteacher will notify the social worker and/or Virtual School Head without delay of a suspension or permanent exclusion and provide the required information. Where possible, they will be involved early when exclusion is being considered and invited to relevant governing board meetings.

13. Education during suspension or permanent exclusion

For the first five school days of a suspension or permanent exclusion, where the pupil is not attending alternative provision, the school will take reasonable steps to set and mark work that is accessible and achievable outside school. Reasonable adjustments will be made for pupils with SEND.

For a suspension of more than five school days, the governing board will ensure that suitable full-time education is arranged to begin no later than the sixth school day. For a permanent exclusion, the local authority is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education from no later than the sixth school day. For looked-after children and pupils with a social worker, the school and local authority should work together to arrange alternative provision from the first day following exclusion where possible.

Parents will be provided with the required details of alternative provision, including start date, times, address and reporting arrangements, within statutory timescales.

14. Cancelling a suspension or permanent exclusion

The Headteacher may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion before the governing board has met to consider reinstatement. A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in the school year, or would have been by the time cancellation takes effect.

Where an exclusion is cancelled, the Headteacher will notify without delay the parents, governing board, local authority and, where relevant, the social worker and Virtual School Head, giving the reason. Parents will be offered an opportunity to meet the Headteacher to discuss the circumstances. The pupil will be allowed to return without delay. Days already missed as a result of the exclusion will count towards the 45-day maximum. The school will record cancellation information required for the school census.

15. Reintegration following suspension or other temporary placement

Adamsrill will support successful reintegration following a suspension, cancelled exclusion, off-site direction or safeguarding separation. A reintegration strategy will offer a fresh start, support the pupil to understand the impact of behaviour where relevant, address underlying needs and reduce the risk of recurrence.

- a positive welcome back and regular contact during absence where appropriate
- a named trusted adult or pastoral support
- academic catch-up and continuity of curriculum
- review of SEND, health or safeguarding needs
- clear expectations and proportionate support

- regular review with the pupil and parents/carers and relevant professionals.

A reintegration meeting may be held before or on return, but attendance by a parent or pupil at such a meeting will never be made a condition of the pupil returning to school.

16. Governing board consideration of reinstatement

The governing board will exercise its statutory functions through an impartial panel of at least three governors who have had no prior involvement that would compromise fairness.

The governing board must convene a meeting to consider reinstatement within 15 school days of receiving notice where:

- the exclusion is permanent;
- a suspension, alone or together with previous suspensions/permanent exclusions, takes the pupil's total above 15 school days in a term; or
- the suspension or permanent exclusion would result in the pupil missing a public examination or National Curriculum test. The board will take reasonable steps to meet before the test/examination; where this is not practical, the chair may consider reinstatement alone.

Where suspensions take the pupil's total above five but below 16 school days in a term, and parents make representations, the governing board will convene a meeting within 50 school days of receiving notice. For suspensions totalling five days or fewer in a term, the board must consider any parental representations but cannot direct reinstatement and is not required to meet with parents.

Parents and the pupil will be given a meaningful opportunity to participate. They may be accompanied by a friend or representative. The Headteacher, local authority representative, and where applicable the social worker and Virtual School Head may attend and make representations. Relevant papers will be circulated in accordance with statutory guidance.

The panel will consider whether the Headteacher's decision was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair, including compliance with equality, SEND and safeguarding duties, and will consider the evidence on the balance of probabilities. It may decline to reinstate or direct reinstatement immediately or on a specified date where legally permitted. Reasons will be clearly recorded and notified in writing without delay.

17. Independent Review Panel following permanent exclusion

Where the governing board decides not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil, its decision letter will explain the right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP), the statutory deadline, where and how to apply, and the right to request the appointment of an SEN expert at no cost to the parent.

An application must normally be made within 15 school days of notice of the governing board's decision not to reinstate, or within the applicable period following final determination of a related discrimination claim. The local authority will arrange the IRP for a maintained school. The IRP may uphold the governing board's decision, recommend reconsideration, or quash the decision and direct reconsideration where the decision is flawed on judicial review principles.

The school and governing board will cooperate fully with the IRP process and any required reconsideration.

18. Equality Act claims

Parents may have a right to bring a claim of unlawful discrimination. Disability discrimination claims relating to exclusion are made to the First-tier Tribunal (Special Educational Needs and Disability); other discrimination claims

may be made to the County Court. The governing board's decision letter will provide the required information and relevant timescales.

19. Admission and attendance registers

A permanently excluded pupil's name will remain on the admission register until the statutory conditions for deletion are met. The school will not remove the pupil prematurely. If an IRP application is made within the statutory period, deletion will await the conclusion of the review process and any required reconsideration.

While the pupil remains registered, attendance will be recorded using the appropriate statutory code. Where no alternative provision is made, Code E is used for authorised absence due to suspension/permanent exclusion. Where the pupil attends approved off-site education or another school at which they are registered, the appropriate code, such as B or D, will be used in accordance with attendance guidance.

The school will notify the local authority without delay when a pupil's name is removed from the admission register following permanent exclusion and will provide the information required by the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

20. School census and record keeping

The school will maintain accurate records and submit suspension, permanent exclusion, cancellation and review data through the school census as required. From the 2026-27 academic year, the school will record the additional review information required by DfE census specifications, including governing board and Independent Review Panel review data where applicable.

Records will include the evidence considered, the pupil's views where obtained, decision and reasons, notifications, education arrangements, reintegration planning, governing board documentation and any subsequent review. Records will be retained securely in accordance with the school's records-management and data-protection arrangements.

21. Monitoring and governance oversight

The Headteacher and governing board will monitor the use and impact of suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site direction, managed moves and safeguarding separation. Data will be reviewed regularly and with appropriate challenge, including:

- frequency, duration, reasons and timing of suspensions and exclusions
- repeat suspensions and pupils at risk of permanent exclusion
- patterns by year group, SEND, disability, sex, ethnicity, disadvantage, looked-after status and other relevant characteristics
- whether interventions and reasonable adjustments are effective
- use, objectives, review and outcomes of off-site direction and managed moves
- whether safeguarding separation arrangements are reviewed at sufficient intervals and pupils are benefiting from the education provided
- attendance and education during periods away from the school site
- evidence of disproportionality, off-rolling or unintended consequences.

The governing board will use this information to hold leaders to account, assure itself that statutory duties are met and identify where policy, practice or provision needs improvement.

22. Roles and responsibilities

22.1 Headteacher

- make lawful decisions on suspension and permanent exclusion
- ensure fair investigation and pupil participation
- consider equality, SEND and safeguarding duties
- make statutory notifications and arrange education where the school is responsible
- maintain accurate records and report to governors.

22.2 Governing board

- consider reinstatement where required
- ensure suitable full-time education from day six of a suspension where required
- monitor patterns, disproportionality and the effectiveness of support
- review off-site direction and safeguarding separation arrangements as required
- ensure panel members are impartial and appropriately informed/trained.

22.3 Local authority

The local authority receives notification of all suspensions and permanent exclusions and fulfils its statutory duties, including arranging suitable full-time education from no later than the sixth school day after a permanent exclusion and arranging an IRP where requested in relation to a maintained school.

23. Remote meetings

Governing board reinstatement meetings and IRPs may be held remotely where permitted by law and statutory guidance. Parents may request remote attendance. Any remote meeting must allow all participants to hear, speak, see and be seen, participate fully, and be conducted fairly and transparently. If technology prevents fair participation, appropriate steps will be taken, including rescheduling where necessary.

24. Complaints

The merits of a suspension or permanent exclusion are considered through the statutory representations, governing board and, for permanent exclusion, Independent Review Panel processes described above. Complaints about other aspects of the school's handling may be considered under the school's Complaints Policy where that procedure applies, but the complaints process cannot substitute for or overturn the statutory exclusion review process.

25. Links with other school policies

- Behaviour Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- SEND Policy and SEN Information Report
- Equality Policy and Accessibility Plan
- Attendance Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Online Safety Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy.

26. Review of this policy

This policy will be reviewed at least annually and sooner if legislation, statutory guidance, local authority procedures or school circumstances change. The Headteacher is responsible for ensuring that operational practice remains aligned with current statutory requirements.

Appendix 1: Headteacher decision checklist

10. Is the proposed action disciplinary? If not, is another lawful framework (for example safeguarding separation) required?
11. Have the facts been established on the balance of probabilities?
12. Has the pupil been enabled to give their view, with suitable support?
13. Have context, safeguarding, SEND, disability, communication needs and equality duties been considered?
14. Have reasonable adjustments and relevant interventions been considered?
15. For permanent exclusion, are both limbs of the statutory test satisfied?
16. Is the decision proportionate and clearly reasoned?
17. Have all required notifications been made without delay?
18. Has education been arranged/set in accordance with day 1-5/day 6 duties?
19. Have reintegration, review and record-keeping requirements been diarised?

Appendix 2: Key statutory timescales at a glance

Requirement	Timescale / threshold
Maximum suspension	45 school days in a single academic year
Alternative provision for suspension over 5 days	Suitable full-time education from no later than the 6th school day
Alternative provision after permanent exclusion	Local authority: suitable full-time education from no later than the 6th school day
Governor meeting: permanent exclusion	Within 15 school days of receiving notice
Governor meeting: total suspension above 15 days in a term	Within 15 school days of receiving notice
Governor meeting: 6-15 days in a term where parent makes representations	Within 50 school days of receiving notice
IRP application after permanent exclusion upheld	Normally within 15 school days of written notification of the governing board decision
Governing board information request by Secretary of State/LA	Provide required exclusion information within 14 days of request

Appendix 3: Authoritative guidance

The school will use the current versions of the following official guidance when applying this policy:

- Department for Education: Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement (effective 26 July 2026).
- Department for Education: Behaviour in Schools.
- Department for Education: Working Together to Improve School Attendance.
- Department for Education: Arranging Alternative Provision: A Guide for Local Authorities and Schools.
- Department for Education: Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.
- Department for Education school census guidance for 2026-27.

- London Borough of Lewisham guidance and procedures for suspensions, permanent exclusions, reintegration and governor review, where consistent with legislation and DfE statutory guidance.