

DISS HIGH SCHOOL

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

October 2025 • Reviewed annually

1. Aims

We are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives an education in a safe and caring environment.

Our school aims to:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently.
- Help governors, staff, parents and pupils understand the exclusions process.
- Ensure that pupils in school are safe and happy.
- Prevent pupils from becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training).
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully.

A note on off-rolling

Off-rolling is unlawful. Diss High School will not remove a pupil from roll without following statutory exclusion procedures or by encouraging a parent to remove their child in the school's interests rather than the child's.

- We will not send pupils home informally or to 'cool off' without a recorded exclusion.
- We will not exclude because of SEND needs, poor academic performance, or failure to attend a meeting.
- We will not exert pressure on parents to remove a child from the school roll.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy is based on statutory guidance from the DfE (September 2023): 'Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement'.

- Section 51A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by the Education Act 2011).
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.
- Education and Inspections Act 2006, Part 7, Chapter 2.
- Education Act 1996, Section 579 (definition of 'school day').
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) Regulations (2007, amended 2014).
- Equality Act 2010.
- Children and Families Act 2014.

This policy complies with the school's funding agreement and articles of association.

3. Definitions

- Suspension – a fixed-period removal from school.
- Permanent exclusion – permanent removal from roll.
- Off-site direction – temporary attendance at another education setting to improve behaviour.

- Managed move – a permanent transfer to another school, agreed by all parties.
- Parent – any person with parental responsibility or care of the child.

4. Roles and responsibilities

4.1 The Headteacher

Deciding whether to suspend or exclude

Only the Headteacher (or acting Headteacher) can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil. This may be for behaviour inside or outside school. Permanent exclusion will only ever be a last resort.

A decision will only be made:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the Behaviour Policy, and
- If allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

The Headteacher will consider all relevant evidence, provocation, SEND needs, vulnerabilities (such as looked-after status or social worker involvement), and whether all alternative options such as off-site direction or managed moves have been explored.

The Headteacher will seek the pupil's version of events where practicable and proportionate to their age and understanding. If it is not possible (e.g. due to safeguarding or refusal), the decision may proceed on the balance of evidence available. Pupils needing support to express their view may do so through an advocate such as a parent or social worker.

SEND or mental health needs do not exempt a pupil from attendance or disciplinary expectations. Such needs will inform support provided alongside sanctions, not in place of them.

Informing parents (or pupil if 18+)

Parents will be informed when a pupil has been suspended or excluded. For each incident resulting in a suspension/exclusion, written confirmation will be sent without delay outlining reasons, duration (if applicable), and parental rights of representation to the Governing Board.

Permanent exclusions

Permanent exclusion will only be considered as a last resort, and usually after a range of interventions and support strategies have been implemented without success. However, in exceptional circumstances, a single, serious breach of the school's Behaviour Policy may justify permanent exclusion on its own. Examples include, but are not limited to, serious violence against another student or member of staff, possession or use of a weapon or illegal substance, or behaviour which poses a significant risk to the safety or welfare of others.

Persistent disruptive behaviour that undermines the education or safety of others, despite repeated interventions and clear warnings, may also lead to permanent exclusion. In all cases, the

Headteacher will take into account the pupil's age, background, any SEND or safeguarding factors, and the wider impact on the school community before making a decision.

4.2 The Governing Board

The Governors' Disciplinary Committee (minimum 3 governors) will consider reinstatement where required by law, within statutory timescales.

The board monitors use of suspensions, exclusions, off-site directions and managed moves for fairness and proportionality, ensuring policies are applied consistently and lawfully.

4.3 The Local Authority (LA)

For permanent exclusions, the LA arranges suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day. For looked-after pupils or those with a social worker, this will start from day one where possible.

5. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

The Governors' Disciplinary Committee will meet within 15 school days of notice for permanent exclusions or suspensions totalling more than 15 days in a term, or where an exam/test would be missed.

The following parties will be invited: parents, the pupil (if appropriate), the Headteacher, social worker, and virtual school head where relevant. Meetings may be held remotely at the parents' request.

The Committee will decide whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair, considering the welfare of all pupils and evidence presented.

If reinstatement is refused, parents will be informed of their right to an Independent Review Panel (IRP).

6. Independent review

Parents may apply for an Independent Review Panel within 15 school days of the Governors' decision. The panel will consist of a lay chair, a governor, and a current or former headteacher.

The IRP can uphold, recommend reconsideration, or quash the decision if it was flawed. Pupil and parent participation will be supported, and SEN experts may be appointed without charge.

7. School registers

A pupil's name will be removed from the roll only after 15 school days have passed since a non-reinstatement decision, unless an independent review has been requested.

The school will make the required return to the Local Authority immediately upon removal, including all statutory pupil and contact details.

8. Returning from a suspension

8.1 Reintegration strategy

Following suspension, the school will implement a reintegration plan, which could include mentoring, daily pastoral contact, regular reviews, and collaboration with parents and external agencies where necessary.

Part-time timetables will only ever be used temporarily, with clear rationale, and reviewed regularly.

8.2 Reintegration meetings

A reintegration meeting will usually be held on the pupil's return, involving parents (where possible), the pupil, and relevant staff. Meetings can proceed without parents if they are unable to attend.

9. Remote access to meetings

Parents or pupils aged 18+ may request remote attendance at governing board or IRP meetings. All participants must be able to see, hear and be seen; fairness and transparency must be maintained.

10. Monitoring arrangements

The school collects and analyses data termly on suspensions, exclusions, off-site directions, and managed moves. Trends are reviewed by SLT and governors to ensure equality, proportionality, and statutory compliance.

11. Links with other policies

- Behaviour Policy
- SEND Policy
- SEN Information Report

Appendix 1: Independent review panel training

All panel members and clerks must have received training within two years of the review date, covering legislation, procedural fairness, equality and human rights duties, and the role of the chair and clerk.