



Brent Exclusions Protocol for Headteachers and Governors 2025/26

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1. Introduction

The principal legislation to which this guidance relates is:

- The Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011.
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012.
- The Education Act 1996; and
- The Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007, as amended by the Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Changes following the update of DfE guidance August 2024;

The legal framework and overall structure of the exclusions process remains mostly unchanged in the DfE's updated guidance 'Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, England – August 2024'.

In the guidance, fixed-term exclusions are now referred to as suspensions. Brent will now use the terminology 'suspensions' when referring to what were previously known as 'fixed-term exclusions'.

Updates in DfE August 2024 guidance for headteachers:

- Headteachers must notify parents/carers (or the pupil if aged 18+), the Governing Board, the local authority (Brent Inclusion Services), the pupil's social worker (where relevant), and the Virtual School Head (VSH) for *all* suspensions and permanent exclusions, including those that are cancelled before they start. Notifications must include the reason for the decision and be made without delay.
- Headteachers can cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion before it begins, provided the Governing Board has not yet met to consider reinstatement. All parties must be informed immediately, and parents offered a meeting to discuss the circumstances.
- Headteachers must inform parents/carers (or pupils aged 18+) of their right to request remote access for Governing Board and Independent Review Panel (IRP) meetings.
- Pupils should be involved in the suspension/exclusion process wherever appropriate, and their views recorded. For pupils aged 18 or over, the process involves them directly rather than their parents.
- The guidance reinforces what constitutes off-rolling and makes clear that informal exclusions (e.g., sending pupils home to "cool off") are unlawful.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) must take a leading role in cases involving safeguarding concerns (e.g., child-on-child abuse) and ensure child-protection files are transferred securely within 5 days when a pupil moves school.
- Schools must have a clear reintegration strategy for pupils returning from suspension, communicated at a reintegration meeting before or at the start of return. This strategy should include academic and pastoral support and, where necessary, multi-agency input.

- Guidance on off-site direction and managed moves is strengthened: these should be used as preventative measures, be voluntary, and include risk assessments for contextual safeguarding.
- Schools must ensure formal processes for informing the VSH about any exclusion of a looked-after child or previously looked-after child.
- Headteachers must consider attendance and safeguarding links when making decisions, and ensure provision for continued education from day 6 (or day 1 for LAC or pupils with a social worker), including use of online platforms such as Oak National Academy.

Updates in DfE guidance for Governing Boards:

- Governing Boards must monitor and analyse suspension and exclusion data, identifying patterns and reviewing interventions to prevent exclusions.
- When reviewing a suspension or permanent exclusion, Governing Boards must invite:
 - o Parents/carers (or the pupil if aged 18+)
 - o The headteacher
 - o A local authority representative (for maintained schools)
 - o The pupil's social worker (where relevant)
 - o The Virtual School Head (for looked-after children)
- Governing Boards must allow remote participation in meetings if requested by parents/carers or pupils aged 18+.
- The clerk must be present at all meetings and ensure the record clearly states how decisions were reached, including consideration of pupil voice and safeguarding factors.

The DfE requires all those involved in exclusion decisions (including headteachers, Governing Boards, local authorities, academy trusts, Independent Review Panel (IRP) members, clerks, and special educational needs experts) to have regard to the August 2024 statutory guidance and to follow it unless they have a good reason not to.

These procedures apply to all pupils who attend maintained schools, academies, and pupil referral units, including any who are below or above compulsory school age (but not 16–19 academies).

The updated guidance applies to suspensions and exclusions which take place on or after 1 September 2024. If schools have ongoing cases, the policy that was in place when the suspension or exclusion process started should be followed.

Updates in DfE guidance for Alternative Provision

In August 2025, the Department for Education introduced voluntary national standards for Non-School Alternative Provision (NSAP) to strengthen quality, safety, and oversight in the alternative provision sector. These standards currently apply on a voluntary basis, but the government has signalled its intention to legislate and make them mandatory when

parliamentary time allows. Schools and local authorities are strongly encouraged to adopt them now to ensure best practice and prepare for future statutory compliance.

The voluntary standards apply to all non-school alternative provision settings (sometimes referred to as unregistered AP). While non-statutory at present, local authorities and schools should begin aligning commissioning and quality assurance processes with these standards immediately.

The voluntary standards set clear expectations across four key areas:

1. Safeguarding and Child Welfare
 - Enhanced DBS checks for all staff and a single central record.
 - Clear child protection policies and a trained safeguarding lead.
2. Health and Safety
 - Robust risk assessments, first aid provision, and fire safety procedures.
3. Admissions, Support and Guidance
 - Transparent referral processes, induction for pupils, and attendance monitoring.
4. Quality of Education
 - Provision must be purposeful and tailored to individual needs, not a holding arrangement.
 - Staff must have appropriate skills and qualifications to deliver meaningful learning.

These standards aim to ensure that all children placed in alternative provision receive safe, high-quality education and support, with clear reintegration or transition plans. Commissioners should only use providers that can demonstrate compliance with NSAP requirements.

The updated protocol should be read alongside the following key documents:

[School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-suspensions-and-permanent-exclusions)

[Brent Reduced Timetable Guidance](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/brent-reduced-timetable-guidance)

[Governance handbook and competency framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/governance-handbook-and-competency-framework)

[Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-together-to-improve-school-attendance)

[Keeping Children Safe in Education - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education)

[Alternative Provision - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/alternative-provision)

[Non-school alternative provision: voluntary national standards - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/non-school-alternative-provision-voluntary-national-standards)

Ofsted Framework

The Ofsted framework introduced in November 2025 replaces the previous 2019 model and brings significant reforms to how schools are inspected and reported on. The changes aim to provide more nuanced, transparent evaluations and reduce the pressure associated with single-word judgements.

Key changes:

- Report Card system: Single overall grades have been removed. Schools now receive a report card with separate graded judgements across six core evaluation areas:
 - Leadership and governance
 - Curriculum and teaching
 - Achievement
 - Attendance and behaviour
 - Personal development and wellbeing
 - Inclusion (*new standalone area*)

(Additional judgements apply for early years and post-16 provision where relevant.)
- Safeguarding: Judged separately as 'Met' or 'Not Met', and displayed prominently on the report card.
- Five-point grading scale for each evaluation area:
 - Exceptional
 - Strong standard
 - Expected standard
 - Needs attention
 - Urgent improvement
- Inspection methodology: The previous "best-fit" approach has been replaced by a secure-fit model, meaning all criteria for a grade must be met.
- Focus areas:
 - Greater emphasis on inclusion and SEND, ensuring disadvantaged learners and those with additional needs are fully supported.
 - Enhanced scrutiny of attendance and behaviour, now combined into a single evaluation area.

- Stronger consideration of staff wellbeing and workload during inspections.
- Safeguarding expectations: Inspectors will evaluate culture, systems, staff training, early help, and pupil voice. Schools must maintain a robust safeguarding culture and meet statutory requirements.
- Monitoring inspections: Schools graded as "Needs attention" or "Urgent improvement" in any area will receive targeted monitoring inspections.
- Narrative feedback: Each grade is accompanied by a short explanation and contextual data to give parents and carers a clearer picture of strengths and areas for improvement.

Brent advises all schools and academies to familiarise themselves with the November 2025 Ofsted Education Inspection Framework and associated toolkits to ensure compliance and best practice.

Reduced Timetables

Brent has an updated Reduced timetables guidance: [Brent Reduced Timetable Guidance](#) . This guidance sets out the statutory position in relation to reduced timetables¹, identifying the exceptional circumstances when it might be appropriate to agree a short-term reduced timetable. The guidance sets out the process to be followed to secure safeguarding responsibilities and provides guidance to schools on what they must do if a timetable is agreed. There is an expectation that all schools should have regard to this guidance in order to ensure statutory compliance and the safeguarding of children across Brent. Brent local authority collects data on children and young people that are on a reduced timetable so these can be logged and tracked.

Timpson review

A [review](#) undertaken in May 2019 by Edward Timpson found there is room for improvement in the way that all schools and academies exclude pupils. Timpson found that there was a minority of schools that were 'off-rolling'² students which posed a significant safeguarding risk. The majority of pupils that were excluded were vulnerable including those with SEN or who were disadvantaged (eligible for Free School Meals/Pupil Premium). A high number were Looked After Children (LAC) and children in need (CiN). The review made 30 recommendations to Government to ensure that exclusions are a last resort.

Brent advises that all schools and academies are familiar with the Timpson review (2019) to support best practice.

Department for Education SEND and Alternative Provision Guidance (February, 2025)

The Department for Education has published updated statutory guidance on Alternative Provision (February 2025) and continues to progress reforms to the SEND system. The guidance sets out clear expectations for local authorities and schools:

- Alternative Provision should be used as a short-term, purposeful intervention, not a destination.
- All AP placements must be high-quality, safe, and tailored to the child's needs, with a clear reintegration or transition plan.

¹ The term *reduced timetable* is used in this protocol to reflect statutory guidance and local authority expectations. Some practitioners use part-time timetable interchangeably, but this can imply a permanent arrangement, which is unlawful for pupils of compulsory school age. Reduced timetables must always be short-term, reviewed regularly, and agreed with parents and the local authority.

² *Off-rolling* refers to the unlawful removal of a pupil from a school roll for reasons primarily in the interests of the school rather than the pupil. Examples include pressuring parents to withdraw their child, encouraging pupils not to return after a managed move, or using alternative provision or elective home education as a way to avoid accountability. Ofsted considers off-rolling a serious safeguarding and leadership failure under the Education Inspection Framework (November 2025).

- Local authorities must develop strategic plans for AP, including funding, quality assurance, and oversight.
- Schools must ensure AP is not used as a substitute for specialist SEND provision.
- Collaboration between education, health, and social care is essential to meet complex needs.

For full guidance, see:

- [DfE Alternative Provision Guidance \(2025\)](#)
- [SEND Improvement Plan](#)

2. Brent Exclusions Protocol

Good discipline and attendance are essential to ensure all pupils benefit from the opportunities provided by Brent schools. Disruptive behaviour can indicate unmet needs. Schools must identify causal factors early and intervene to reduce the risk of exclusion, considering whether behaviour relates to unmet SEND, safeguarding concerns, or other vulnerabilities.

Schools should:

- Consult their allocated Inclusion Support Officer on all matters relating to exclusions.
- Complete a multi-agency assessment for pupils with persistent disruptive behaviour, considering social, emotional, mental health, and family factors
- Ensure any pupil at risk of exclusion has a Pastoral Support Plan (PSP) and consider early help or health referrals where appropriate.
- Involve pupils in decision-making and reintegration planning, with their views recorded and considered.
- Take account of contributing factors such as bereavement, mental health, or bullying before deciding to exclude.
- Have due regard to the SEND Code of Practice, Equality Act 2010, and Children and Families Act 2014.
- Avoid discrimination and monitor disproportionality, particularly for groups vulnerable to exclusion.
- Avoid permanently excluding pupils with an EHCP or looked-after children except in the most exceptional circumstances, considering emergency reviews or alternative placements first.

- Use alternatives to exclusion, such as managed moves or off-site direction³, as preventative measures, ensuring risk assessments and reintegration plans are in place.
- Ensure exclusions are lawful, reasonable, and fair. Informal exclusions are unlawful.

Before considering exclusion, managed moves, or off-site direction, schools must demonstrate that they have implemented appropriate interventions to address the underlying causes of behaviour. These may include targeted pastoral support, behaviour mentoring, counselling, adjustments to teaching and curriculum, Early Help referrals, and multi-agency involvement. Schools should evidence these steps and ensure they are proportionate, timely, and tailored to the pupil's needs. Exclusion should only be considered when these interventions have not succeeded and the pupil's behaviour continues to pose a serious risk to the education or welfare of others.

The decision to permanently exclude a child from school should only be taken in response to a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy and where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. The decision on whether to exclude is for the Headteacher to make. However, where practical, Headteachers should continue to give pupils an opportunity to present their case before taking the decision to exclude. Pupils need to be given the opportunity to express their views - with the support of advocates (such as a parent or social worker), if needed - unless their age or understanding means it's not appropriate to do so. Where pupils do get the opportunity to express themselves, they should also be informed of how their views were taken into consideration in reaching a decision.

Whilst exclusion may still be an appropriate sanction, Headteachers should take account of any contributing factors that are identified such as social, emotional, mental health or family problems. All Headteachers are expected to have due regard of the SEND Code of Practice (2015), the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014 when issuing exclusions.

The decision to exclude a pupil must be lawful, reasonable and fair. Schools have a statutory duty not to discriminate against pupils on the basis of their sex, race, disability, religion or belief, sexual orientation, because of a pregnancy/maternity or because of gender reassignment. All schools should give particular consideration to the fair treatment of pupils from groups who are vulnerable to exclusion. In Brent, there is still a disproportionate number of exclusions for young people from a black ethnic background, especially those of black Caribbean and black African heritage. Headteachers should avoid excluding permanently any pupil with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) or a looked after child.

Consideration should always be given to a change of placement and in the case of a pupil with an EHCP an emergency review of the EHC plan.

³ Under current DfE statutory guidance (*Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from Maintained Schools, Academies and Pupil Referral Units in England*, updated August 2024), “**managed move**” refers to a voluntary, agreed process intended to result in a permanent transfer to another school. It must be agreed by the current school, receiving school, and parents/carers; trial periods are not permitted. In contrast, “**off-site direction**” is a statutory power under *Section 29A of the Education Act 2002* allowing a school to require a pupil to attend another site temporarily to improve behaviour. The pupil remains on the roll of the home school during an off-site direction. These terms should not be used interchangeably.

Maintained schools have a statutory power under Section 29A of the Education Act 2002 to direct a pupil off-site for education to improve their behaviour. This power is governed by the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) Regulations 2010, which set out requirements for planning, parental notification, and review.

Academies do not have this statutory power, but they can arrange off-site provision for similar purposes under their general powers in the Academy Trust's Articles of Association and funding agreement. While the regulations do not apply to academies, the DfE statutory guidance (August 2024) advises that they should follow the same principles of good practice, including ensuring placements are purposeful, time-limited, and in the pupil's best interests, with clear reintegration plans and parental agreement.

Managed move

A Managed Move is a voluntary process agreed between the current school, the receiving school, and the pupil's parents/carers to provide a fresh start and avoid permanent exclusion. Managed moves should only be considered after other interventions have been exhausted and must always be in the child's best interests.

During the managed move trial period:

- The pupil remains dual-registered:
 - Home school = main registration.
 - Receiving school = subsidiary registration.
- Schools must use correct attendance codes:
 - Code D – Dual registration.
 - Code E – Absent (if not attending either school). (Accurate coding is essential for safeguarding, census returns, and compliance with statutory guidance.)

Before initiating a managed move, schools must agree:

- The nature and purpose of the move.
- Clear objectives and timelines.
- Agreement with parents/carers in writing.
- How EHCP objectives will be met (if applicable).
- Risk assessment for contextual safeguarding.
- Information-sharing protocols (SEND, safeguarding, attendance).

Safeguarding and SEND:

- The DSL must oversee the process and ensure compliance with KCSIE.
- If the pupil has an EHCP, an emergency annual review must be held before triggering the move, as this constitutes a change of placement. Notify the LA when the pupil transfers permanently.

Reintegration strategies should:

- Offer a fresh start.
- Help pupils understand expectations and school culture.

- Foster belonging and engagement with learning.
- Be communicated clearly at the start of the move.

Monitoring and Review:

- The receiving school should review progress regularly and report outcomes to the home school and local authority.
- The managed move should have a clear end date and review points.

Unlawful practices include:

- Informal exclusions (e.g., sending pupils home to “cool off”).
- Coercing parents to agree under threat of exclusion.
- Using managed moves as a default for SEND needs.

Off-site direction

Off-site direction is when a Governing Board of a maintained school requires a pupil to attend another education setting to improve their behaviour. Academies can also arrange off-site provision under their general powers.

During the period of off-site direction:

- The pupil may attend Alternative Provision (AP) part-time alongside mainstream schooling or full-time for a limited period. AP must be short-term, purposeful, and high-quality, with a clear reintegration or transition plan.
- The pupil must be dual-registered. The home school remains the main registration, and the alternative provision or receiving school is the subsidiary registration. Schools must use the correct attendance codes:
 - Code B – Education off-site (not dual registered)
 - Code D – Dual registration (pupil is registered at two settings)
 - Code E – Absent (no alternative provision arranged)
(Accurate coding is essential for safeguarding, census returns, and compliance with statutory guidance.)
- If the pupil has an EHCP, the school must hold an emergency annual review before triggering off-site direction, as this constitutes a change of placement. Notify the LA when the pupil returns to their home school.
- Schools must confirm that AP staff have passed safeguarding checks and comply with KCSIE requirements.
- Schools must inform the pupil’s social worker (where relevant) of any unexplained absences and follow Working Together to Improve School Attendance guidance.
- The Governing Board must review the placement regularly and record decisions.

Before moving a pupil to AP, schools must agree:

- The nature and purpose of the intervention
- Clear objectives and timelines
- Agreement with parents/carers

- How EHCP objectives will be met (if applicable)

The pupil must continue to receive a broad and balanced curriculum that supports reintegration into mainstream school. Reintegration strategies should:

- Offer a fresh start
- Help pupils understand the impact of their behaviour
- Teach expectations aligned with school culture
- Foster belonging and engagement with learning
- Be communicated at a reintegration meeting before or at the start of return
- Managed moves should:
 - Be voluntary and in the child's best interests
 - Include risk assessments for contextual safeguarding
 - Be preceded by information-sharing and supported by an integration plan
 - Never involve pressure on parents or threats of exclusion

Unlawful practices include:

- Informal exclusions (e.g., sending pupils home to "cool off") are prohibited.
- Alternative Provision cannot be used as a default for SEND needs.
- Off-rolling includes coercing parents to remove a child under threat of exclusion or encouraging elective home education.

Suspension extension or conversions

The DfE statutory guidance (August 2024) confirms that a suspension cannot be extended or 'converted' into a permanent exclusion. In exceptional circumstances—usually where new evidence comes to light—a further suspension may be issued to begin immediately after the first ends, or a permanent exclusion may be issued to begin immediately after the suspension ends. Each decision must be separate and justified.

Please see the **Brent Exclusions Toolkit for Headteachers and Governors** for an implementation guide.

Cancellation of Suspensions or Exclusions

Headteachers may cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion before it begins, provided the Governing Board has not yet met to consider reinstatement. When cancelling:

- Notify without delay:
 - Parents/carers (or the pupil if aged 18+)
 - The Governing Board
 - The local authority (LA)
 - The pupil's social worker (where relevant)
 - The Virtual School Head (VSH) (where relevant)

- Provide all parties with the reason for cancellation.
- Offer parents/carers the opportunity to meet with the headteacher without delay to discuss the circumstances.

Important:

- Any days already missed count towards the maximum of 45 school days a pupil can be suspended in a school year.
- A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been suspended for more than 45 days in that school year.

Reintegration Following Suspension or Cancellation

Schools must reintegrate pupils without delay following a suspension or cancellation. Reintegration strategies should:

- Offer a fresh start and help the pupil re-engage with learning.
- Be communicated clearly at a reintegration meeting (attendance cannot be a pre-condition for readmission).
- Include academic and pastoral support, and involve multi-agency partners where needed.
- Avoid reduced timetables for behaviour management except in exceptional, short-term cases.

Contributing Factors

When considering a suspension or exclusion, headteachers should take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident of poor behaviour, such as bereavement, mental health issues, or bullying.

Education Provision

Schools must provide full-time education from day 6 of a suspension. For pupils who are looked-after or have a social worker:

- Work with the local authority to arrange alternative provision from day 1.
- Where this is not possible, take reasonable steps to set and mark work for the pupil.
- Online platforms such as Oak National Academy or Google Classroom may be used for interim provision.

Suspending or Excluding Children with Social Workers

Schools must balance safeguarding and behaviour needs when considering suspension or exclusion for pupils under the care of a social worker:

- The child may have known safeguarding risks at home or in the community, and school is often a protective factor.
- Schools have a duty to provide safe and calm environments for all pupils and staff.

To manage these competing interests:

- Involve the child's social worker, the school's DSL, and the pupil's parents as early as possible in any behaviour issues that could lead to suspension or exclusion.
- If the child is a previously looked-after child (LAC), involve parents and the Designated Teacher (DT).
- If the child has a social worker or is a LAC, the DT should make the Virtual School aware.
- All parties should consider the factors affecting the child's behaviour and agree on further assessments and support to prevent suspension or exclusion.

Attendance and Exclusions

Good attendance is a legal requirement and a key indicator of safeguarding and inclusion. Persistent absence is strongly correlated with poor outcomes and increased risk of suspension or permanent exclusion. Under the Education Inspection Framework (November 2025), attendance and behaviour are judged together, and inspectors will scrutinise how schools address attendance barriers before resorting to exclusion.

Statutory Duties

Schools must:

- Follow the DfE guidance *Working Together to Improve School Attendance*.
- Promote a culture of high attendance and early intervention.
- Record attendance accurately using statutory codes, including:
 - Code B (Education off-site)
 - Code D (Dual registration)
 - Code E (Absent, no alternative provision)
- Notify the local authority of pupils missing education and comply with Children Missing Education duties.

Link Between Attendance and Exclusion

Before considering suspension or permanent exclusion, headteachers must:

- Review the pupil's attendance record and identify patterns of absence.
- Consider whether poor attendance is linked to:
 - Unmet SEND needs
 - Safeguarding concerns
 - Mental health or family issues
- Evidence that reasonable steps have been taken to address attendance barriers, including:
 - Meetings with parents/carers
 - Early Help referrals
 - Attendance action plans

- Multi-agency involvement where appropriate

Reintegration and Attendance

Reintegration meetings following suspension must:

- Include discussion of attendance barriers and strategies to improve attendance.
- Agree clear actions for parents, pupils, and the school.
- Avoid using reduced timetables as a behaviour sanction. Where a reduced timetable is agreed for reintegration, it must:
 - Be time-limited (maximum 6 weeks)
 - Be reviewed weekly
 - Be reported to the local authority

Governance and Monitoring

Governing Boards must:

- Monitor attendance alongside suspension and exclusion data.
- Challenge patterns of persistent absence and exclusion, especially for vulnerable groups (SEND, disadvantaged, looked-after children).
- Ensure the school has an attendance strategy and escalation process in place.

Inspection Expectations

Ofsted will expect schools to demonstrate:

- Robust attendance systems and early intervention.
- Evidence that exclusion decisions considered attendance and safeguarding factors.
- Clear reintegration plans addressing attendance barriers. Failure to meet these expectations may result in a “Needs Attention” or “Urgent Improvement” grade for Attendance and Behaviour under the new EIF.

Operational Processes

The DSL's role in exclusions

In cases involving safeguarding concerns (e.g., child-on-child abuse), a safeguarding investigation may run in parallel with exclusion considerations.

Schools must remain focused on their duties to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils.
- Provide a suitable education.

Decisions ultimately sit with the headteacher, but the DSL should take a leading role, applying professional judgment and working with other agencies as required.

When a child is permanently excluded, the DSL of the excluding school must:

- Transfer the pupil's child-protection file securely within 5 days for an in-year transfer, or within the first 5 days of a new term.
- Ensure the file is sent separately from the main pupil file, with confirmation of receipt.
- Notify relevant staff at the receiving school that the file has been transferred.

The roles of the Virtual School Headteacher (VSH) and social workers in exclusions

In addition to being informed of any suspensions or exclusions of children under their care, the VSH and social worker must be invited to participate in any Governing Board meetings and independent review panels (IRPs).

Both the VSH and the social worker will understand a pupil's background and be able to provide important information about the child's experiences and welfare. Both should attend or ensure representation at meetings to review exclusions, as far as possible:

- The VSH can play an advisory role in cases involving LAC or previously LAC, providing information on the child's background and circumstances that may have contributed to the suspension or exclusion
- The social worker can serve as the child's advocate, identifying how the child's circumstances have led to the suspension or exclusion while making sure the child's welfare and safeguarding risks and needs are taken into account

Reporting suspensions to the Local Authority

Please note that any suspensions must be reported in line with the DfE categories, as below, both to the local authority and on the school's MIS/SIMS.

DfE Primary Suspension Codes - please only select one

BU – Bullying	DA - Drug & alcohol related
DB - Persistent disruptive behaviour	DM – Damage
DS - Abuse relating to disability	PA - Physical assault against adult
PP - Physical assault against pupil	RA - Racist abuse
SM - Sexual misconduct	TH – Theft
VA - Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against adult	VP - Verbal abuse/threatening behaviour against pupil
MT - Inappropriate use of social media or online technology	LG - Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity
PH - Wilful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health	OW - Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item

All schools should make a monthly return of suspensions and managed moves/ dual registration by completing an EX1 Suspension Form to schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk on the 1st day of every month.

Permanent Exclusions

All permanent exclusions should be reported to the local authority when the headteacher has taken the decision. A copy of the exclusion letter should be emailed to schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk together with a completed EX2 - Permanent Exclusion Notification Form. All relevant forms that need to be filled in by the school will be sent on receipt of the exclusion letter from the school.

School Governors should be informed of the permanent exclusion and they should arrange a meeting to consider reinstatement of the pupil within 15 school days

Headteachers must now inform parents/carers of their right to make a request for a remote meeting when notifying them of the exclusion.

By the sixth day: Inclusion Support Officers will provide parents/carers with support and Brent River College will arrange for an interview and appropriate full time education provision will be provided by the 6th day of permanent exclusion. If Brent River College is not a suitable placement, the Alternative Provision and School Engagement Coordinator will arrange an interview and provide a placement in a suitable alternative provision.

The excluded pupil will transfer to the roll of Brent River College or alternative provision if the parent/carer does not request an independent review.

For pupils who are looked-after or have a social worker, schools should work with the LA to arrange **alternative provision from day 1** of suspension or exclusion.

The role of the Governing Board

Governing Boards should already be reviewing and challenging attendance, suspension, and exclusion data, including movements off-site. This now requires deeper analysis to ensure fairness and effectiveness. Governing Boards should:

- Analyse data for patterns, including disproportionality (e.g., where pupils with specific characteristics are disproportionately affected).
- Consider the cost implications of educating pupils off-site.
- Review whether the data reflects that the school's behaviour policy is being implemented consistently and effectively.
- Monitor interventions in place to support pupils at risk, to prevent suspensions and exclusions.
- Analyse any variation in exclusion trends to understand why it is happening and what can be done to prevent it.
- Ensure pupils moved off-site are reviewed at regular intervals and reintegration plans are in place.

The Governing Board procedures for reviewing suspensions and exclusions

When reviewing a suspension or permanent exclusion, Governing Boards must invite:

- Parents/carers (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The headteacher
- A local authority representative (for maintained schools or PRUs)
- The pupil (if aged 18 or older)
- The pupil's social worker (where relevant)
- The Virtual School Head (VSH) for looked-after or previously looked-after children

Additional requirements:

- Parents/carers and pupils aged 18+ must be informed of their right to request remote access to the meeting.
- Governing Boards must consider any representations made by parents, even if they do not attend.
- Meetings should take place within a reasonable timeframe. In the absence of parental representations, Governing Boards may consider reinstatement on their own.
- The clerk must be present and ensure the record clearly states:
 - How decisions were reached
 - Consideration of pupil voice
 - Safeguarding factors and mitigating circumstances

Governors Discipline Committee (GDC)

Headteacher suspends/permanently excludes pupil

Suspension	Permanent exclusion
<p>Clerk/Chair of Committee receive copy of suspension letter from Headteacher</p> <p>Clerk arranges a meeting of the Governing Board Committee if appropriate and contacts all involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1–5 school days: Governing Board is not required to meet.• 6–15 school days in one term: Meeting only if parents request it; must occur within 50 school days.• 16–45 school days in one term: Meeting required; must occur within 15 school days. <p><i>(When pupils have been excluded for any more than 15 days, including 15.5 days, in a term, the governing board must consider reinstatement within 15 days)</i></p>	<p>Clerk/Chair of Committee receives copy of exclusion letter from Headteacher.</p> <p>Clerk contacts all involved and arranges a suitable date for a meeting of the Governing Board (the meeting must take place no later than 15 school days of notice of the exclusion)</p>

Clerk sends

- Letter inviting parents to the Governing Board Committee meeting
- Order of proceedings
- Any evidence to be considered at the meeting

Clerk takes notes of meeting and records the decision of the Governing Board Committee. None of the parties, with the exception of the Clerk, should be alone with the Governing Board Committee at any time.

Parents/carers and pupils aged 18+ must be informed of their right to request remote access to the meeting.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Clerk sends a letter (without delay) informing parents of the decision with copy to schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk

** The requirements are different for suspensions where a pupil would be excluded for more than five but not more than 15 school days in a term. In this case, if the parents make representations, the governing board must consider and decide within 50 school days of receiving the notice of suspension whether the suspended pupil should be reinstated. In the absence of any representations from the parents, the governing board is not required to meet and cannot direct the reinstatement of the pupil.*

Full exclusion guidance for Governors can be requested by mailing schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk

Independent Review Panels (IRPs)

Parents have the right to appeal to an Independent Review Panel following a permanent exclusion, even if they did not make representations to the Governors' Discipline Committee. Brent can coordinate the IRP for community schools free of charge. Details are available on BestBrent or by emailing committee@brent.gov.uk.

Remote Access

Face-to-face meetings remain the default, but remote access is permitted:

At the request of parents/carers or the pupil (if aged 18+).

In exceptional or unforeseen circumstances.

Headteachers must inform parents/carers and pupils aged 18+ of their right to request remote access when notifying them of the exclusion. Remote meetings should follow the principles set out in Annex A of the DfE guidance.

Role of the Independent Review Panel

The IRP reviews the Governing Board's decision, not the headteacher's original decision. Panels must make one of three decisions:

- Uphold the Governing Board's decision.
- Recommend that the Governing Board reconsider reinstatement.
- Quash the decision and direct the Governing Board to reconsider reinstatement.

IRPs must consider:

- Whether statutory guidance was followed.
- Pupil voice and safeguarding factors.
- Compliance with Equality Act and SEND Code of Practice.

Financial Adjustment

Where an Independent Review Panel (IRP) directs the governing board to reconsider reinstatement of a permanently excluded pupil, the board must do so within 10 school days. If, after reconsideration, the board decides not to reinstate, the IRP may order a financial adjustment of £4,000:

- For maintained schools: deducted from the school's budget.
- For academies: paid to the local authority.
This adjustment does not apply if the IRP only recommends reconsideration.

Timescales

Parents/carers (or pupils aged 18+) have 15 school days from the Governing Board's decision letter to apply for a review.

Schools must not remove a pupil from the register until:

- The IRP process is complete, and
- Any reconsideration directed or recommended by the IRP has been carried out.

Police Involvement

There is no requirement to delay decisions because of ongoing police investigations or potential criminal proceedings. Decisions should be based on the evidence available at the time.

Model Letters

Brent advises headteachers to use the model letters provided for exclusions. Model letters for schools can be found in the **Brent Exclusions Toolkit for Headteachers and Governors**.

Notification Forms

The Local Authority provides the necessary forms to complete upon excluding a pupil. These forms are as follows:

- Form [EX1 – Monthly Notification](#) to LA of all suspensions and managed moves (incl. a nil return).
- Form [EX2 – Notification](#) to LA of a permanent exclusion.

Schools are also expected to update the local authority of the outcome of an IRP.

It is the responsibility of schools to ensure this information is provided to the LA, as failure of schools to return these forms can lead to safeguarding and census implications.

Registration and off rolling permanently excluded pupils

The headteacher must remove a pupil's name from the school admissions register if:

- **15 school days have passed** since parents were notified of the Governing Board's decision to uphold a permanent exclusion and no application for an Independent Review Panel (IRP) has been made; or
- Parents have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an IRP.

If an application for an IRP is made within 15 school days, the headteacher must wait until the review has been determined or abandoned before removing the pupil's name from the register.

Where a pupil's name is removed and a discrimination claim is subsequently made, the First-tier Tribunal or County Court has the power to direct reinstatement.

Whilst an excluded pupil's name remains on the school's admissions register:

- Use the correct attendance codes:
 - **Code B** (Education Off-site) or **Code D** (Dual Registration) where the pupil attends alternative provision.
 - **Code E** where the pupil is absent and not attending alternative provision.
- Pupils placed at Brent River College or other alternative providers after the 6th day of permanent exclusion must be **dual registered** until taken off roll. The excluding school remains the substantive registration until removal.

Stage	Excluding school	BRC/AP
PEX through to Governors Appeal	On roll	
6 th day of PEX	Dual registration (Main)	Dual registration (Subsidiary)
Governors Appeal Independent Review	Dual registration (Main)	Dual registration (Subsidiary)
PEX confirmed place at BRC/AP	Off Roll	On roll
Attending BRC/AP		On roll

Important:

- Removing a pupil from roll for any reason other than lawful permanent exclusion is considered off-rolling and will be scrutinised by Ofsted.
- Alternative provision must be high-quality, safe, and purposeful, with a clear reintegration or transition plan.

Permanent Exclusions- funding adjustments

The local authority has a statutory duty to recoup the pro-rata balance of funding from schools and academies for pupils who are permanently excluded. This deduction covers:

- The basic entitlement.
- Pupil-led factors such as Free School Meals (FSM), English as an Additional Language (EAL), and any other relevant criteria.

Funding is reclaimed from the sixth school day following the date of permanent exclusion and calculated for the remaining number of weeks in the financial year. The LA uses this funding to meet its statutory duty to provide full-time education for permanently excluded pupils from Day 6.

The principle is that funding follows the pupil. If the excluded pupil is subsequently admitted to a new school, the remaining balance should be passed to the admitting school.

Example calculation (illustrative only):

A Year 8 pupil excluded in Financial Year 2025/26, 6th day following exclusion: 06/11/2025 = 21 weeks from 6th school day following exclusion until end of Financial Year (31/03/2026).

Factor	2025/26 rate	Pro-rata
	£	£
KS3 Average Weighted Pupil Unit	5628.23	2272.94
Free School Meal	269.89	109.00
English as an additional language	1637.83	661.43
Deduction from excluding school's budget		3043.36

Key Contacts

Brent Exclusions Email
schoolexclusions@brent.gov.uk
Inclusion Support Officers

Muna Benhamou	muna.benhamou@brent.gov.uk	020 8937 4579
Natalie Phillips	natalie.phillips@brent.gov.uk	020 8937 3679
Ato Carboo	Ato.carboo@brent.gov.uk	
TBC	TBC	TBC
Alternative Education and School Engagement Co-ordinator		
Valerie Brooks	valerie.brooks@brent.gov.uk	
Inclusion Support Team Manager		
Ryan Manning	Ryan.Manning@brent.gov.uk	
Inclusion Team	Pupil.Referrals@brent.gov.uk	

Links to further Guidance

Please note that Brent Council cannot be held responsible for the content of external websites:

- [Governance Handbook and Competency Framework](#)
- [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance \(DfE, August 2024\)](#)
- [Alternative Provision Statutory Guidance \(DfE, February 2025\)](#)
- [SEND and Alternative Provision Improvement Plan](#)
- [Special Educational Needs and Disabilities \(SEND\) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years](#)
- [Education for children with health needs who cannot attend school](#)
- [Mental health and behaviour in schools](#)
- [Working together to improve school attendance](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education \(KCSIE 2025\)](#)
- [Working Together to Safeguard Children \(2025\)](#)
- [Children missing education](#)
- [Promoting the health and wellbeing of looked-after children](#)
- [Designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children](#)
- [Behaviour in Schools Guidance](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation in schools](#)
- [Improving School Attendance: Support for Schools and Local Authorities](#)
- [Education inspection framework \(EIF\)](#)
- [Respectful School Communities: Self Review and Signposting Tool](#)

- [Creating a Culture: Review of Behaviour Management in Schools \(Tom Bennett\)](#)