



Northern Lights
LEARNING TRUST

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Reviewed: Autumn 2026
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Policy Owner: Director of Inclusion
Approval: Board of Trustees

Pastoral Care/Spiritual Development

The quality of relationships between all members of school staff and pupils, and the relationship with parents and carers is the area that is most commonly associated with the ethos of the schools in our Trust. It is expressed in the terms of sharing and caring. In the Church schools in our Trust, we follow the teachings of:

‘Love your neighbour as yourself’ – Matthew 22:39.

‘This is my commandment: love each other’ - John 15:17.

In our schools we believe every pupil is an individual who is valued for who they are. We have a series of overlapping networks of relationships, which includes governors, staff, children, parents, church members, and members of the community which the school seeks to serve. Our pastoral work will strive to meet the significant challenge to create and maintain such networks including in our Church schools in ways which reflect the Gospel. Those who are in leadership roles, which includes all who have a particular responsibility, ensure that by their personal example they set the highest standards expected.

It is from this premise that both Christian and spiritual love will pervade all aspects of life at Northern Lights Learning Trust. It will influence how we reward and teach discipline. It will affect how we value work and the achievements of pupils and staff. It will be seen in the way in which the school environments are created and cared for, in the way in which the needs of pupils, parents, and community are met, and in the way in which teaching and non-teaching staff work together effectively as a team. Pastoral care pervades all aspects of school life and therefore will be reflected in the way the schools are organised, and the policies are written and implemented.

Aims

Northern Lights Learning Trust and all schools within the Trust are committed to following all statutory exclusions procedures to ensure that every child receives education in a safe and caring environment in line with our Trust and individual School values. Our Trust and all schools will:

- Ensure that the exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- Help Governors, Staff, Parents/Carers understand the exclusions process
- Ensure that pupils in school are safe and happy
- Aim to prevent pupils becoming NEET (not in education, employment or training)
- Ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out lawfully

A note on off-rolling

Northern Lights Learning Trust and all schools within the Trust are aware that **off-rolling is unlawful**.

Ofsted defines off-rolling as:

“The practice of removing a pupil from the school roll without a formal, permanent exclusion or by encouraging a parent to remove their child from the school roll, when the removal is primarily in the interests of the school rather than in the best interests of the pupil.”

‘Off-rolling’ is a form of gaming and occurs where a school decides, in the interests of the school and not the pupil to:

- Remove a pupil from the school admission register without a formal, permanent exclusion, or
- Encourage a parent/carer to remove their child from the school, or
- Retain a pupil on the school admission register but not allow them to attend the school normally, without a formal permanent exclusion or suspension, or
- Move a pupil to alternative provision (AP) where this is not in their best interests, or
- Send a pupil home without formally recording a suspension regardless of whether it occurs with the agreement of parents/carers, or
- Place a pupil on a part-time timetable for behavioural reasons
- Remove a pupil from the school roll without following due process

Northern Lights Learning Trust and all schools will not suspend or permanently exclude a pupil unlawfully by telling or forcing them to leave, encouraging their parent(s)/carer(s) to remove them from the school, or not allowing them to attend school without following the statutory procedure contained in the [School Discipline \(Pupil Exclusions and Reviews\) \(England\) Regulations 2012](#), or formally recording the event.

Any suspension or exclusion will be made on disciplinary grounds, and will not be made:

- Because a pupil has special educational needs and/or a disability (SEND) that the school feels unable to support, or
- Due to a pupil’s poor academic performance, or
- Because the pupil hasn’t met a specific condition, such as attending a reintegration meeting

If any pupil is suspended or permanently excluded on the above grounds, this will also be considered as ‘off-rolling’.

Legislation and statutory guidance

Northern Lights Learning Trust policy is based on statutory guidance from the Department for Education: [Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement –](#)

It is based on the following legislation, which outlines schools’ powers to suspend and permanently exclude pupils:

- Section 51a of the Education Act 2002, as amended by the Education Act 2011
- The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012

In addition, the policy is based on:

- Part 7, chapter 2 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which sets out parental responsibility for excluded pupils
- Section 579 of the [Education Act 1996](#), which defines 'school day'
- 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](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Children and Families Act 2014](#)
- The [Inspection information for state-funded schools](#), which defines 'off-rolling'

Roles and responsibilities

Headteacher

Deciding whether to suspend or exclude

Only the Headteacher/Head of School, or acting Headteacher, can suspend or permanently exclude a pupil from school on disciplinary grounds. The decision can be made in respect of behaviour inside or outside of school. The Headteacher/Head of School will only use permanent exclusion as a last resort.

A decision to suspend a pupil will be taken only:

- In accordance with the school's behaviour policy
- To provide a clear signal of what is unacceptable behaviour
- To show a pupil that their current behaviour is putting them at risk of permanent exclusion

Where suspensions have become a regular occurrence, the Headteacher /Head of School will consider whether suspensions alone are an effective and whether additional strategies need to be put in place to address behaviour issues.

A decision to permanently exclude a pupil will be taken only:

- In response to serious or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy, **and**
- If allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of others such as staff or pupils in the school

Before deciding whether to suspend or exclude a pupil, the Headteacher/Head of School will:

- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence on the balance of probabilities, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events considering these in light of their age and understanding unless it would not be appropriate to do so
- Consider whether the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)
- Consider whether the pupil is especially vulnerable (e.g. the pupil has a social worker, or is a looked-after child (LAC) or a previously looked after child)
- Consider whether all alternative solutions have been explored, such as:
 - For suspensions, detentions or other sanctions provided for in the behaviour policy
 - For exclusions, off-site direction (for temporary placements) or managed moves (which are permanent and not used as trial placements)

When considering off-site direction, all NLLT schools comply with the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026 and has regard to the Arranging alternative provision: a guide for local authorities and schools.

Before directing a pupil off-site or agreeing a managed move, the school will:

- Be in conjunction with the LGB in accordance with the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) regulations
- Ensure the pupil's views are sought and considered
- Be able to evidence that appropriate interventions have already been implemented

- Share relevant information with the receiving setting and the local authority (LA), including attainment data, risk assessments and support strategies

Where a managed move is being considered for a pupil with a social worker, all NLLT schools will inform, at the earliest opportunity:

- The social worker
- The DSL
- Parents/carers (unless this would create a safeguarding risk)
- For looked after children: the virtual school head (VSH)

The Headteacher/Head of School will consider the views of the pupil, in light of their age and understanding, before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude, unless it would not be appropriate to do so.

Pupils who need support to express their views will be allowed to have their views expressed through an advocate, such as a parent/carer or social worker, if appropriate.

The Headteacher/Head of School will not reach their decision until they have heard from the pupil and will inform the pupil of how their views were taken into account when making the decision.

If it is decided that a managed move is in the pupil's best interests, the original school and new school will work together to make sure that any personal education plan (PEP) that the pupil has is reviewed and amended to reflect the move.

Where there are concerns about the behaviour, or risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, of a pupil with SEN, a disability or an education, health and care (EHC) plan, the school will, in partnership with others (including where relevant, the LA), consider what additional support or alternative placement may be required. This will involve assessing the suitability of provision for the pupil's SEN or disability.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the school will contact the LA about any behavioural concerns at an early stage and consider requesting an early annual review prior to making the decision to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil.

If there is an ongoing safeguarding investigation (whether that includes a criminal investigation or not) that may result in the permanent exclusion of a pupil, or if a pupil has been reinstated to the school, it is likely that complex and difficult decisions will need to be made. These decisions will be made alongside the school's safeguarding duties and its duty to provide an education.

Deciding whether to temporarily remove a pupil from the school site for safeguarding reasons

In exceptional circumstances, the Headteacher/Head of School may decide to temporarily prevent a pupil from attending the school site for '*safeguarding reasons*'. This is not an exclusion on disciplinary grounds.

This measure will only be used when:

- It is necessary to separate pupils to ensure safety, and
- There is no reasonable alternative that would allow all pupils to remain on site

Decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis, led by the Headteacher/Head of School/designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and informed by multi-agency working where appropriate (e.g. children's social care or the police).

Where this measure is used, the school will:

- Inform parents/carers without delay, including the reasons for the decision
- Notify the Local Governing Body without delay
- Notify the Executive Directors for Education and Safeguarding
- Provide work for the pupil to complete at home, or work with the LA to ensure suitable education is arranged
- Support the pupil's reintegration, as soon as it is safe to do so

Informing parents/carers

If a pupil within our schools is at risk of suspension or exclusion the Headteacher/Head of School will inform the parents/carers as early as possible, in order to work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

If the Headteacher/Head of School decides to suspend or exclude a pupil, the parents/carers will be informed, in person or by telephone, of the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it, without delay.

The parents/carers will also be provided with the following information in writing, without delay from the individual Schools:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about the parents'/carers right to make representations about the suspension or permanent exclusion to the governing board and, where the pupil is attending alongside parents, how they may be involved in this
- How any representations should be made
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to convene a Governing Board Disciplinary Committee (GBDC) within 15 school days to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents/carers have a right to attend the meeting, be represented at the meeting (at their own expense) and bring a friend
- That parents/carers can request that the meetings be held remotely, and how and to whom they should make this request. At Northern Lights Learning Trust and all our schools we believe that the most effective avenue is representation face to face at any meeting. However, we fully understand that exceptional circumstances may not allow this and therefore there is the above opportunity to request a remote meeting

If the pupil is of compulsory school age, the Headteacher/Head of School will also notify parents without delay and by the end of the school working day on the first day their child is suspended or permanently excluded, that:

- For the first 5 school days of an exclusion (or until the start date of any alternative provision or the end of the suspension, where this is earlier), the parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. This will include specifying on which days this duty applies
- Parents may be given a fixed penalty notice or prosecuted if they fail to do this

If alternative provision is being arranged, the following information will be included, if possible:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
- The address at which the provision will take place
- The name of the person the pupil should report to on arrival
- The duration of the placement
- The reasons for, and objectives of, the placement
- The start and finish times of any such provision
- Where 2 sessions per day are provided:
 - What time the morning sessions starts
 - What time the afternoon session ends
 - What time the break between them starts and ends
- Where a single session per day is provided:
 - What time the session starts and ends

Please note: If the Headteacher/Head of School does not have all the information about the alternative provision arrangements by the end of the afternoon session on the first day of the suspension or permanent exclusion, they will provide the information at a later date, without delay and no later than 48 hours before the provision is due to start.

The only exception to this is where alternative provision is to be provided before the sixth day of a suspension or permanent exclusion, in which case the school reserves the right to provide the information with less than 48 hours' notice, with parents' consent.

If (the Headteacher/Head of School cancels/rescinds the suspension or permanent exclusion, they will notify the parents without delay and provide a reason for the cancellation.

Informing the Local Governing Body

The Headteacher/Head of School will, without delay, will notify the Chair of the Local Governing Body of:

- Any permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil (in exceptional circumstances)
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil missing a National Curriculum test or public exam
- Any suspension or permanent exclusion that has been cancelled/rescinded, including the reason for the cancellation.

Informing the Local Authority (LA)

The Headteacher/Head of School will notify the LA of all suspensions and permanent exclusions without delay, regardless of the length of a suspension.

The notification will include:

- The reason(s) for the suspension or permanent exclusion
- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the Headteacher/Head of School will also, without delay, inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it.

The Headteacher/Head of School must notify the LA without delay of any cancelled exclusions, including the reason the exclusion was cancelled.

Informing the pupil's social worker and/or virtual school head (VSH)

If a:

- **Pupil with a social worker** is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the Headteacher/Head of School will inform **the social worker** as early as possible
- **Pupil who is a looked-after child (LAC)** is at risk of suspension or exclusion, the Headteacher/Head of School will inform **the VSH** as early as possible

By doing this the school and VSH can work together to consider what factors may be affecting the pupil's behaviour, and what further support can be put in place to improve the behaviour.

Where a looked-after child is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion, the school will consider:

- How effectively the current personal education plan (PEP) is being implemented, and
- Whether an interim review of the PEP needs to take place
- How the school is using Pupil Premium Plus

If the decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil with a social worker/a pupil who is looked after is made, the Headteacher/Head of School will inform the pupil's social worker/the VSH, as appropriate, without delay, that:

- They have decided to suspend or permanently exclude the pupil
- The reason(s) for the decision
- The length of the suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent

- The suspension or permanent exclusion affects the pupil's ability to sit a National Curriculum test or public exam (where relevant)
- They have decided to cancel a suspension or permanent exclusion, and why (where relevant)

The social worker/VSH will be invited to any meeting of the Local Governing Body about the suspension or permanent exclusion. This is so they can provide advice on how the pupil's background and/or circumstances that may have influenced the circumstances of their suspension or permanent exclusion. The social worker should also help ensure safeguarding needs and risks and the pupil's welfare are taken into account.

Cancelling/Rescinding suspensions and permanent exclusions

The Headteacher/Head of School may cancel or rescind a suspension or permanent exclusion that has already begun, or one that has not yet begun, but only where it has not yet been reviewed by the Local Governing Body. Where there is a cancellation:

- The parents/Carers, Local Governing Body and LA will be notified without delay
- Where relevant, any social worker and VSH will be notified without delay
- The notification must provide the reason for the cancellation
- The Governing Board's duty to hold a meeting and consider reinstatement ceases
- Parents/Carers will be offered the opportunity to meet with the Headteacher/Head of School to discuss the cancellation, which will be arranged without delay
- The pupil will be allowed back in school without delay

Any days spent out of school as a result of any exclusion, prior to the cancellation, will count towards the maximum of 45 school days permitted in any school year.

Please note: A permanent exclusion cannot be cancelled if the pupil has already been excluded for more than 45 school days in a school year or if they will have been so by the time the cancellation takes effect.

Providing education during the first 5 days of a suspension or permanent exclusion

During the first 5 days of a suspension, if the pupil is not attending alternative (AP) provision, the Headteacher/Head of School will take steps to ensure that achievable and accessible work is set and marked for the pupil. This may be in the form of online resources such as Oak Academy/school-based resource systems etc or written resources which the school may feel is appropriate. If the pupil has a special educational need or disability, the Headteacher/Head of School will make sure that reasonable adjustments are made to the provision where necessary through effective liaison with parents/carers and the school SENDCO.

If the pupil is looked after or if they have a social worker, the school will work with the relevant agencies to ensure effective support is in place and any additional support or assessments are considered.

The Local Governing Body

Considering suspensions and permanent exclusions

Responsibilities regarding suspensions and permanent exclusions are delegated to the Governing Board Disciplinary Committee (GBDC) which will consist of at least three serving governors.

The Governing Body Disciplinary Committee has a duty to consider parents'/carers representations about a suspension or permanent exclusion. It has a duty to consider the reinstatement of a suspended or permanently excluded pupil (see relevant sections) in certain circumstances.

Within 14 days of receiving a request, the Local Governing Board will provide the secretary of state with information about any suspensions or exclusions within the last 12 months.

For any suspension of more than 5 school days, suitable full-time education will be arranged for the pupil. The Local Governing Body will be informed of this. This provision will begin no later than the sixth day of the suspension.

For Secondary schools within Northern Lights Learning Trust the Local Governing Body does not have to arrange such provision for pupils in their final year of compulsory education who do not have any further public exams to sit.

A Governing Board Disciplinary Committee (GBDC) will be formed and will consider the reinstatement of the suspended or permanently excluded student within 15 school days of receiving notice of the suspension or permanent exclusion if:

- It is a permanent exclusion
- It is a suspension which would bring the student's total number of school days out of school to more than 15 in a term;
- It would result in the student missing a public examination or national curriculum test.

If requested to do so by parents/carers, a GBDC will consider the reinstatement of a suspended student within 50 school days of receiving notice of the suspension if the student would be suspended from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 16, in a single term by way of a suspension review.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion would result in a student missing a public examination, the GBDC will consider the reinstatement of the student before the date of the examination, if this is not practicable, the GBDC will consider the suspension or permanent exclusion alone and decide whether to reinstate the student.

The GBDC can either:

- Decline to reinstate the student, or
- Direct reinstatement of the student immediately, or on a particular date.

The following parties will be invited to a meeting of the GBDC and will be invited to make representations or share information:

- Parents/Carers (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The pupil, if they are aged 17 or younger and it would be appropriate to their age and understanding (and, where requested, a representative or friend)
- The Headteacher
- The pupil's social worker, if they have one
- The VSH, if the pupil is looked after

The meeting can be held remotely at the request of parents/carers. See appropriate section for more details on remote access to meetings.

The GBDC will try to arrange the meeting within the statutory time limits set out above and must try to have it at a time that suits all relevant parties. However, its decision will not be invalid simply on the grounds that it was not made within these time limits.

In reaching a decision, the GBDC will consider whether the suspension or permanent exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the Headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether the facts are true 'on the balance of probabilities', which differs from the criminal standard of 'beyond reasonable doubt', as well as any evidence that was presented in relation to the discussion to suspend or permanently exclude.

Minutes of the meeting will be taken, as a record of evidence considered will be kept. The outcome of the GBDC's decision will be noted on the student's educational record.

The GBDC will notify, in writing, the Head of School, parents/carers and the Local Authority as well as any Social Worker or the Virtual School Head where applicable of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay

For a permanent exclusion, the GBDC's decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent
- Notice of parents/carers' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and details of the role of the SEN expert; and

- That the parent may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel.
- The date by which an application for an independent review must be made; (i.e., 15 school days from the date on which notice in writing of the governing board's decision is given to parents/carers)
- The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted, along with any written evidence;
- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the student's SEN are considered to be relevant to the permanent exclusion;
- That, regardless of whether the excluded student has recognised SEN, parents/carers have a right to require the Academy Trust to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review panel;
- Details of the role of the SEN expert so that parents/carers may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents/carers may also bring a friend to the review.
- That if parents/carers believe that the exclusion has occurred as a result of discrimination, they may make a claim under the Equality Act 2010 to the first-tier tribunal (special educational needs and disability), in the case of disability discrimination, or the county court, in the case of other forms of discrimination. A claim of discrimination made under these routes should be lodged within 6 months of the date on which the discrimination is alleged to have taken place.
- A GBDC can be held remotely at the request of the parent/carer, or the student if they are aged 18 or above.

Monitoring and analysing suspensions and exclusions data

In all Northern Lights schools the Local Governing Body will review, challenge and evaluate the data on the school's use of suspension, exclusion, off-site direction to alternative provision, and managed moves as part of their strategic role and responsibilities.

The Local governing body will:

- Closely scrutinise patterns of all pupil movement, including suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site direction and managed moves
- Ensure these measures are only used as a last resort
- Review any use of separation from site for safeguarding purposes
- Challenge and support the school's leadership team to identify and address emerging trends

The Local Governing Body will consider:

- How effectively and consistently the school's behaviour policy is being implemented
- The school register and absence codes
- Instances where pupils receive repeat suspensions
- Interventions in place to support pupils at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion
- Any variations in the rolling average of permanent exclusions, to understand why this is happening, and to make sure they are only used when necessary
- Timing of moves and permanent exclusions, and whether there are any patterns, including any indications which may highlight where policies or support are not working
- The characteristics of suspended and permanently excluded pupils, and why this is taking place
- Whether the placements of pupils directed off-site into alternative provision are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and that pupils are benefiting from it
- The cost implications of directing pupils off-site

Performance data and benchmarking:

Governors will hold leaders to account and make informed decisions. To enable them to do so, they'll make use of performance data in the following areas:

- Pupil numbers, attendance and exclusions
- Attainment and progress
- Curriculum planning and class sizes

- Financial management and governance
- Quality assurance
- Safeguarding and wellbeing
- The school community, including staff, pupils, parents/carers and the governing board

The Local Authority (LA)

For permanent exclusions, the LA will arrange suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth school day after the first day of the exclusion.

For pupils who are looked after or have social workers, the LA and the individual school will work together to arrange suitable full-time education to begin from the first day of the exclusion or as soon as possible.

Independent Review Panel (IRP)

If parents/carers apply for an independent review within the legal timeframe, Northern Lights Learning Trust will, at our own expense, arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the GBDC not to reinstate a permanently excluded pupil.

Applications for an independent review must be made within 15 school days of notice being given to the parents/carers by GBDC of its decision to not reinstate the pupil **or**, if after this time, within 15 school days of the final determination of a claim of discrimination under the Equality Act (2010) regarding the permanent exclusion. Any applications made outside of this timeframe will be rejected.

Independent reviews can be held remotely at the request of parents/carers – (See relevant section for more details on remote access to meetings).

A panel of three or five members will be constituted with representatives (as decided by Northern Lights Learning Trust) from each of the categories below:

- A lay member to chair the panel who has not worked in any school in a paid capacity, disregarding any experience as a school governor or volunteer
- Current or former school governors who have served as a governor for at least 12 consecutive months in the last 5 years, provided they have not been teachers or Headteachers during this time
- Headteachers or individuals who have been a Headteacher within the last 5 years.

A person may not serve as a member of a review panel if they:

- Are a member/director of the of the excluding school
- Are the Headteacher/Head of School of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- Are an employee of the Academy Trust, or the Local Governing Body of the excluding school (unless they are employed as a Headteacher at another school)
- Have, or at any time have had, any connection with the Academy Trust, school, the Local Governing Body, parents or pupil, or the incident leading to the exclusion, which might reasonably be taken to raise doubts about their impartiality
- Have not had the required training within the last 2 years.

The panel must consider the interests and circumstances of the pupil, including the circumstances in which the pupil was permanently excluded, and have regard to the interests of other pupils and people working at the school.

Taking into account the pupil's age and understanding, pupils and parents/carers will be made aware of their right to attend and participate in the review meeting, and the pupil should be enabled to make representations on their own behalf, should they desire to.

Where a SEN expert is present, the panel must seek and have regard to the SEN expert's view of how SEN may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a social worker is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how the pupil's experiences, needs, safeguarding risks and/or welfare may be relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Where a VSH is present, the panel must have regard to any representation made by the social worker of how any of the child's background, education and safeguarding needs were considered by the Headteacher in the lead up to the permanent exclusion or are relevant to the pupil's permanent exclusion.

Following its review, the independent panel will decide to do one of the following:

- Uphold the original GBDC's decision
- Recommend that the Local Governing Body reconsiders reinstatement of the pupil
- Quash the GBDC's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only if it judges that the decision was flawed)

New evidence may be presented, though the school cannot introduce new reasons for the permanent exclusion or the decision not to reinstate. The panel must disregard any new reasons that are introduced.

In deciding whether the decision was flawed, and therefore whether to quash the decision not to reinstate, the panel must only take account of the evidence that was available to the GBDC at the time of making its decision. This includes any evidence that the panel considers would, or should, have been available to the GBDC and that it ought to have considered if it had been acting reasonably.

If evidence is presented that the panel considers it is unreasonable to expect the GBDC to have been aware of at the time of its decision, the panel can take account of the evidence when deciding whether to recommend that the Local Governing Body reconsider reinstatement.

The panel's decision can be decided by a majority vote. In the case of a tied decision, the chair has the casting vote.

Once the panel has reached its decision, the panel will notify all parties in writing without delay.

This notification will include:

- The panel's decision and the reasons for it
- Where relevant, details of any financial readjustment or payment to be made if the Local Governing Body does not subsequently decide to offer to reinstate the pupil within 10 school days
- Any information that the panel has directed the Local Governing Body to place on the pupil's educational record

School registers

A pupil's name will be removed from the admission register if:

- 15 school days have passed since the parents/carers were notified of Local Governing Body's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents/carers have stated in writing that they will not be applying for an independent review panel

Where an application for an independent review has been made within 15 school days, the governing board will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

While the pupil's name remains on the school's admission register, the pupil's attendance will still be recorded appropriately. Where alternative provision (of an approved educational activity that does not involve the pupil being registered at any other school) has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) will be used on the attendance register. During off-site direction to another school or educational establishment, code D (dual registration) will be used.

Where excluded pupils are not attending alternative provision, code E (absent) will be used.

A pupil will be registered at 1 school only. Where a managed move is agreed, the pupil's name will be removed from the admission register when the move becomes permanent. Where a pupil attends off-site provision, the original school retains responsibility for the pupil's registration unless and until a permanent move is agreed.

Making a return to the LA

Where a pupil's name is to be removed from the admissions register because of a permanent exclusion, the school will make a return to the LA. The return will include:

- The pupil's full name
- The full name and address of any parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides
- At least 1 telephone number at which any parent/carer with whom the pupil normally resides can be contacted in an emergency
- The grounds upon which their name is to be deleted from the admissions register (i.e. permanent exclusion)
- Details of the new school the pupil will attend, including the name of that school and the first date when the pupil attended or is due to attend there, if the parents have told the school the pupil is moving to another school
- Details of the pupil's new address, including the new address, the name of the parent(s)/carer(s) the pupil is going to live there with, and the date when the pupil is going to start living there, if the parents have informed the school that the pupil is moving house

This return must be made as soon as the grounds for removal is met and no later than the removal of the pupil's name.

Returning from a suspension, off site direction or separation for safeguarding purposes

Reintegration strategy

Following suspension, or cancelled suspension or exclusion, the school will put in place a strategy to help the pupil reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education.

Where it is necessary, the school will work with third-party organisations to identify whether the pupil has any unmet special educational and/or health needs.

The following measures may be implemented, as part of the strategy, to ensure a successful reintegration into school life for the pupil.

The points below are examples:

- Maintaining regular contact during the suspension or off-site direction and welcoming the pupil back to school
- Daily contact in school with a designated pastoral lead
- Mentoring by a trusted adult
- Regular reviews with the pupil and parents/carers to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage
- External support

Northern Lights Learning Trust understands that Part-time timetables should not be used to manage pupil's behaviour and, if used, will be put in place for the minimum time necessary.

The strategy will be regularly reviewed and adapted where necessary throughout the reintegration process in collaboration with the pupil, parents, and other relevant parties.

Reintegration meetings

- All schools within Northern Lights Learning Trust will clearly explain the reintegration strategy to the pupil, inclusive of parents/carers depending on age and understanding in a reintegration meeting before or on the pupil's return to school. During the meeting the school will communicate to the

pupil/parents or carers that they are getting a fresh start and that they are a valued member of the school community.

- The pupil, parents/carers, a member of senior staff, and any other relevant staff will be invited to attend the meeting.
- The meeting can proceed without the parents/carers in the event that they cannot or do not attend, dependent on pupil's age and understanding.
- The school expects all returning pupils and their parents/carers to attend their reintegration meeting, but pupils who do not attend will not be prevented from returning to the classroom.

Remote access to meetings

Northern Lights Learning Trust and all schools believe that Face to Face in person meetings are most effective, but we fully understand that this may not always be possible, and the right to request from parents/carers a remote meeting.

Parents/carers can request that a Governing Body Disciplinary Committee meeting, or independent review panel be held remotely. If the parents/carers don't express a preference, within 24 hours of the meeting date, the meeting will be held in person.

In case of extraordinary or unforeseen circumstances, which means it is not reasonably practicable for the meeting to be held in person, the meeting could be held remotely.

Remotely accessed meetings are subject to the same procedural requirements as in-person meetings.

The GBDC and the school should make sure that the following conditions are met before agreeing to let a meeting proceed remotely:

- All the participants have access to the technology which will allow them to hear, speak, see and be seen
- All the participants will be able participate fully
- The remote meeting can be held fairly and transparently

Social workers and the VSH always have the option of joining remotely, whether the meeting is being held in person or not, as long as they can meet the conditions for remote access listed above.

The meeting will be rearranged to an in-person meeting without delay if technical issues arise that can't be reasonably resolved and:

- Compromise the ability of participants to contribute effectively, or
- Prevent the meeting from running fairly and transparently

Monitoring arrangements

Northern Lights Learning Trust and individual schools within the Trust will collect data on the following:

- Attendance, permanent exclusions and suspensions
- Use of pupil referral units, off-site directions and managed moves
- Anonymous surveys of staff, pupils, and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences

The data will be analysed and reported back through the appropriate channels

The data will be analysed from a variety of perspectives including:

- At school level
- By age group
- By time of day/week/term
- By protected characteristic

The school will use the results of this analysis to make sure it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010. If any patterns or disparities between groups of pupils are identified by this analysis, the school will review its policies in order to tackle it.

Northern Lights Learning Trust will work with our schools/academies to consider this data and to analyse whether there are patterns across the trust, recognising that numbers in any 1 academy may be too low to allow for meaningful statistical analysis.

This policy will be reviewed annually or if any guidance changes or is updated.

Educational Record Retention

Exclusion records and supporting evidence will be retained for a minimum of six months and longer where safeguarding, complaints or legal proceedings require.

Links with other policies

- Behaviour policy
- SEND policy
- SEN information report
- Safeguarding policy

Appendix 1: Training for Panels

Northern Lights Learning Trust ensure that all panel members of a GBDC have received the appropriate training within two years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing suspensions and permanent exclusions on disciplinary grounds, which would include an understanding of how the principles applicable in an application for judicial review relate to the panel's decision making

- The need for the panel to observe procedural fairness and the rules of natural justice
- The role of the chair and the clerk of a review panel
- The duties of Headteachers, governing boards and the panel under the Equality Act 2010
- The effect of section 6 of the Human Rights Act 1998 (acts of public authorities unlawful if not compatible with certain human rights) and the need to act in a manner compatible with human rights protected by that Act