St. Bede's Catholic Infant School Exclusion Policy 2026/27
Based on HBC Model Exclusion Policy

Agreed by Staff Autumn 2026
Approved by Governors Autumn 2026
Review Date Autumn 2027
Signed Chair of Governors S Howard Date 24.11.26

Contents

MISSION STATEMENT 1
1. Aims 1
2. Legislation and statutory guidance 2
6. The decision to exclude 3
7. Definition 4
8. Roles and responsibilities 4
9. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil 5
10. An independent review 6
11. School registers 7
12. Returning from a suspension 7
13. Monitoring arrangements 7
14. Links with other policies 7

MISSION STATEMENT

At St. Bede's Catholic Infant School it is the mission of the whole school community to nurture a loving, safe, caring, supportive, quality environment in which the individual has the opportunity to develop intellectually, spiritually, morally, socially and emotionally in an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect.

1. Aims

Our school aims to ensure that:

- The exclusions process is applied fairly and consistently
- The exclusions process is understood by governors, staff, parents and pupils
- Pupils in school are safe and happy

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

This policy should also be read alongside

- Halton Borough Council's Permanent Exclusions Policy and Procedures (September 2026)
- Department for Education's Suspension and Permanent Exclusion statutory guidance (upd July 2026).
  The Halton guidance additionally identifies:
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Equality Act 2010
- Education Act 2002 (sections 51A–51C, as amended) as relevant legislation and guidance.

3. Partnership with Parents

Parents working in partnership with the school to consistently reinforce the school's expectations is an important factor in every child's success. At St Bede's Catholic Infant School we will work in partnership with parents to ensure that expectations are clear and parents can reinforce them with their children. This includes ensuring that parents are kept informed about emerging behavioural concerns at the earliest opportunity and involved in support planning, reviews and relevant multi-agency meetings. Any decisions made in response to a child's misbehaviour can be addressed so that we can work together in the best interests of pupils to ensure expectations for behaviour are made clear. Written notices will be accessible, and parents will be signposted to free, impartial advice, including Halton SENDIASS where appropriate.

The school is responsible for communicating to pupils, parents and staff its expectations of standards of conduct. A range of policies and procedures are in place to promote good behaviour and appropriate conduct. These are:

- Behaviour Policy;
- Anti-Bullying Policy;
- Home-School Agreement

4. Supporting Pupils to Succeed

We aim to include, not exclude, and we approach all challenging behaviour in a supportive and positive way. We recognise that such behaviour can sometimes be symptomatic of a real, deeper need for our support and understanding. All children can go through times of inappropriate behaviour, and we strive to never "give up" easily on a child as we recognise that each person has a unique contribution to make to school life and we want to support them to achieve this.

Before permanent exclusion is considered, the school will evidence a graduated approach to prevention and early intervention, using Halton's Ordinarily Available Inclusive Toolkit, reasonable adjustments, SEND support, individual support or behaviour plans, educational psychology advice, Early Help and Team Around the School (TAS) where appropriate. TAS referrals for primary pupils are made through the Local Authority Universal Referral Form.

The school will consider whether behaviour indicates unmet or undiagnosed SEND, trauma, exploitation, bullying, bereavement, domestic abuse or other safeguarding and welfare needs. For pupils with an EHCP or identified SEND, the school will follow Halton's pre-exclusion review expectations, including an interim annual review where applicable. For children in care, the Virtual School Head and social worker will be informed promptly and the Personal Education Plan reviewed; where a pupil has a social worker, the social worker and DSL will be involved.

No exclusion will be initiated without first attempting other strategies or, in the case of a serious single incident, a proper investigation.

5. Types of Exclusion

A managed move is a voluntary, agreed permanent transfer, not an exclusion; it must be in the pupil's best interests, supported by written consent from the relevant parties, and notified to the Local Authority.

Off-site direction is a temporary, reviewed arrangement for improving behaviour, not a permanent exclusion.

Informal exclusions, off-rolling, pressuring families into home education, and making reinstatement conditional are prohibited.

Internal Exclusion
Internal exclusion is when a pupil is excluded from the rest of the school and must work away from their class for a fixed amount of time. This will be in a different classroom.
An internal exclusion is a discretionary measure, where a pupil's behaviour is escalating and more serious measures need to be taken but there are not yet grounds for an external / suspension. Typically, a child receiving a consequence of this level should be receiving additional support for their behaviour, intended to help them to avoid their behaviour escalating to a point where a suspension is necessary (examples: behaviour chart to address specific behaviours causing a problem; support from the learning mentor etc)

Suspension (previously known as fixed-term exclusion)
A suspension is when a child is excluded from school and must remain home for a fixed amount of time. This should be for the shortest time necessary to ensure minimal disruption to the child's education, whilst mindful of the seriousness of the breach of policy.

Permanent Exclusion
A permanent exclusion is when a child is permanently excluded from school and not allowed to return. The decision to permanently exclude must be taken by the Headteacher and then the decision is scrutinised by a panel of Governors.

6. The decision to exclude
Permanent exclusion must be a last resort, lawful, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Decisions will be made on the balance of probabilities after considering the pupil's account, relevant evidence, reasonable adjustments, SEND, safeguarding and equality duties, and possible bullying, harassment or coercion. The headteacher will record reasonable alternatives considered, such as additional support, TAS referral, alternative provision, off-site direction or a genuinely voluntary managed move.
Where temporary separation of pupils is necessary solely for safeguarding, the school will follow the distinct safeguarding process described in the July 2026 guidance; this must not be recorded as a disciplinary exclusion. An ongoing police investigation does not automatically require a permanent exclusion decision to be postponed: the headteacher will decide fairly on the evidence available and liaise with police as appropriate.
The headteacher may cancel a permanent exclusion before the governing board meets to consider reinstatement, subject to the statutory limits. The school will notify parents, the governing board, the Local Authority and, where applicable, the social worker and Virtual School Head without delay, give reasons, and offer parents a meeting. The pupil must be allowed to return without delay.

Only the headteacher, or acting headteacher, can exclude a pupil from school. A permanent exclusion will be taken as a last resort.

Our school is 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."

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

A decision to 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

Before deciding whether to exclude a pupil, either permanently or for a fixed period, the headteacher will:
- Consider all the relevant facts and evidence, including whether the incident(s) leading to the exclusion were provoked
- Allow the pupil to give their version of events
- Consider if the pupil has special educational needs (SEN)

Pupils' behaviour outside school e.g. on school trips, at sports events, is subject to the school's behaviour policy. Unacceptable behaviour in such circumstances will be dealt with as if it had taken place in school; and additionally this includes the any serious breach of policy which could 'bring the school into disrepute'.

7. Definition

For the purposes of exclusions, school day is defined as any day on which there is a school session. Therefore, INSET or staff training days do not count as a school day.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 The headteacher

For permanent exclusion, the headteacher will notify parents/carers verbally as soon as possible and follow immediately in writing, including reasons, representation rights, the governing board review timescale, access to school records and independent review rights. The governing board and Halton Education, Improvement & Provision team must be informed without delay using the Local Authority online notification process; the home authority, social worker and Virtual School Head must also be informed where relevant.

Informing parents

The headteacher will immediately provide the following information, in writing, to the parents of an excluded pupil:

- The reason(s) for the exclusion
- The length of a suspension or, for a permanent exclusion, the fact that it is permanent
- Information about parents' right to make representations about the exclusion to the governing board and how the pupil may be involved in this
- How any representations should be made
- Where there is a legal requirement for the governing board to meet to consider the reinstatement of a pupil, and that parents have a right to attend a meeting, be represented at a meeting (at their own expense) and to bring a friend

The headteacher will also notify parents by the end of the afternoon session on the day their child is excluded that for the first 5 school days of an exclusion, or until the start date of any alternative provision where this is earlier, parents are legally required to ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without a good reason. 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 when notifying parents of an exclusion:

- The start date for any provision of full-time education that has been arranged
- The start and finish times of any such provision, including the times for morning and afternoon sessions, where relevant
- The address at which the provision will take place
- Any information required by the pupil to identify the person they should report to on the first day

Where this information on alternative provision is not reasonably ascertainable by the end of the afternoon session, it may be provided in a subsequent notice, but it will be provided 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 an exclusion, in which case the information can be provided with less than 48 hours' notice with parents' consent.

Informing the governing board and local authority

The headteacher will immediately notify the governing board and the local authority (LA) of:

- A permanent exclusion, including when a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude a pupil
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil being excluded for more than 5 school days (or more than 10 lunchtimes) in a term
- Exclusions which would result in the pupil missing a public examination

For a permanent exclusion, if the pupil lives outside the LA in which the school is located, the headteacher will also immediately inform the pupil's 'home authority' of the exclusion and the reason(s) for it without delay.
For all other exclusions, the headteacher will notify the LA as soon as possible (using the correct notification form) and will inform the governing board once a term.

8.2 The governing body

Responsibilities regarding exclusions are delegated to the Governing Body Exclusion Panel consisting of at least 3 governors.

The Exclusion Panel has a duty to consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil (see section 6).

8.3 The LA

For the first five school days of permanent exclusion, the school will set and mark suitable work from day one. Halton Local Authority arranges suitable full-time education from the sixth school day; for primary-aged pupils this is normally managed through a tuition arrangement. The school will promptly share educational, SEND, pastoral and safeguarding information needed to support the provision.

For permanent exclusions, the LA is responsible for arranging suitable full-time education to begin no later than the sixth day of the exclusion.

9. Considering the reinstatement of a pupil

For a permanent exclusion, the governing board or a committee of at least three governors must consider reinstatement within 15 school days of notification. The pupil and parents must be able to make representations, and the board will consider SEND and safeguarding obligations. Any direction to reinstate must be unconditional. Where the statutory conditions apply, parents may request deferral if they have received less than 15 school days' notice of the meeting. Governors will periodically review exclusion and pupil-movement data for disproportionate impact.

The Exclusion Panel will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 15 school days of receiving the notice of the exclusion if:

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

If requested to do so by parents, the Exclusion Panel will consider the reinstatement of an excluded pupil within 50 school days of receiving notice of the exclusion if the pupil would be excluded from school for more than 5 school days, but less than 15, in a single term.

Where an exclusion would result in a pupil missing a public examination, the Exclusion Panel will consider the reinstatement of the pupil before the date of the examination. If this is not practicable, the chair of the governing body (or the vice-chair where the chair is unable to make this consideration) will consider the exclusion independently and decide whether or not to reinstate the pupil.

The Exclusion Panel can either:

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

In reaching a decision, the Exclusion Panel will consider whether the exclusion was lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair and whether the headteacher followed their legal duties. They will decide whether or not a fact is 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 decision to exclude.

Minutes will be taken of the meeting, and a record of evidence considered kept. The outcome will also be recorded on the pupil's educational record.

The Exclusion Panel will notify, in writing, the headteacher, parents and the LA of its decision, along with reasons for its decision, without delay.

Where an exclusion is permanent, the Exclusion Panel's decision will also include the following:

- The fact that it is permanent
- Notice of parents' right to ask for the decision to be reviewed by an independent review panel, and:
    - The date by which an application for an independent review must be made
    - The name and address to whom an application for a review should be submitted

- That any application should set out the grounds on which it is being made and that, where appropriate, reference to how the pupil's SEN are considered to be relevant to the exclusion
- That, regardless of whether the excluded pupil has recognised SEN, parents have a right to require the LA to appoint an SEN expert to attend the review
- Details of the role of the SEN expert and that there would be no cost to parents for this appointment
- That parents must make clear if they wish for an SEN expert to be appointed in any application for a review
- That parents may, at their own expense, appoint someone to make written and/or oral representations to the panel, and parents may also bring a friend to the review

- That if parents 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

10. An independent review

Halton's September 2026 guidance specifies that an independent review panel should be convened within 15 school days of receiving a valid application. If the panel recommends or directs reconsideration, the governing board must reconsider within 10 school days. The guidance describes a £4,000 financial readjustment where reconsideration is directed and reinstatement is not offered within the applicable timescale. Parents may request a SEN expert to advise the panel, funded by the Local Authority.

If parents apply for an independent review, the LA will arrange for an independent panel to review the decision of the governing body 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 by the Exclusion Panel of its decision to not reinstate a pupil.

A panel of 3 or 5 members will be constituted with representatives from each of the categories below. Where a 5-member panel is constituted, 2 members will come from the school governors category and 2 members will come from the headteacher category.

- 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
- 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 of the LA or governing body of the excluding school
- Are the headteacher of the excluding school, or have held this position in the last 5 years
- Are an employee of the LA or the 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 LA school, 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 (see appendix 1 for what training must cover)

A clerk will be appointed to the panel.

The independent panel will decide one of the following:

- Uphold the governing body's decision
- Recommend that the governing body reconsiders reinstatement
- Quash the governing body's decision and direct that they reconsider reinstatement (only when the decision is judged to be flawed)

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

11. School registers

The school must not remove a permanently excluded pupil from the admission register until the applicable independent review period has expired or the review process has concluded. Halton's September 2026 guidance specifies attendance code D while a pupil attends Local Authority-arranged provision; attendance coding must be checked against the current statutory attendance guidance. The DSL will ensure any child protection file is transferred securely and separately to the receiving setting within the required timescale, with receipt confirmed.

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

- 15 school days have passed since the parents were notified of the exclusion panel's decision to not reinstate the pupil and no application has been made for an independent review panel, or
- The parents 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, the governing body will wait until that review has concluded before removing a pupil's name from the register.

Where alternative provision has been made for an excluded pupil and they attend it, code B (education off-site) or code D (dual registration) will be used on the attendance register.

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

12. Returning from a suspension

Where a permanently excluded pupil is reinstated or transfers into new education provision, a structured reintegration plan should be developed with pupil and parental involvement and relevant agencies. Halton's reintegration standard provides for a written plan within 10 school days of starting the new provision, a review within six school weeks and a 12-week engagement and attendance target.

Following a suspension, a re-integration meeting will be held involving the pupil, parents, a member of senior staff and other staff, where appropriate. (Halton has a model format for these meetings available on the HBSS section of the Local Offer).

The following measures may be implemented when a pupil returns from a suspension:

- Agreeing a behaviour contract
- Supporting the pupils' needs through a SEND Support Plan consisting of an IBP (individual Behaviour Plan) with SMART targets that are reviewed and amended regularly
- Having regular meetings between the child, parents/carers and the school

13. Monitoring arrangements

2026 update – Governors will review exclusion and pupil-movement patterns, including ethnicity, SEND status, sex/gender, care status and disadvantage, to identify potential disproportionate impact. Halton requests termly exclusion data returns as a minimum, and the governing board should undertake and report an equality-focused review at least annually.

Miss J Coughlan (headteacher), Miss Parle (Assistant Head and acting Headteacher) and Miss J Scragg monitor the number of exclusions. Miss Scragg reports back to the governors termly. They also liaise with the local authority to ensure suitable full-time education for excluded pupils.

This policy will be reviewed by Miss J Scragg annually in the Autumn term. At every review, the policy will be approved by the governing body.

14. Links with other policies

This exclusions policy is linked to our

- Behaviour policy – (click here)
- SEND policy and information report – (click here to access our Inclusion/SEND Policies) and (Send Information Report)

This policy is supported by other policies which Safeguard and Promote the welfare of children in this school.

Appendix 1: Independent review panel training

The LA must ensure that all members of an independent review panel and clerks have received training within the 2 years prior to the date of the review.

Training must have covered:

- The requirements of the primary legislation, regulations and statutory guidance governing exclusions, 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 bodies 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