Southlands School

Policy name: Suspension & Permanent Exclusion



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Approval Date	Feb 2026
Policy Approver	Jo Dunn, Compliance, Regulation and Quality Director
Next Review Date	Feb 2029
Version No.	001
Policy Level	Education
Staff groups affected	All Education



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POLICY

Suspension & Permanent Exclusion Education Universal

Monitoring and Review

This policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through the service's established governance and quality assurance systems. Responsibility for ensuring that the policy remains compliant with legislation and regulatory frameworks sits with the Proprietor Representative and Regional Lead.

A formal review of this policy will be undertaken no later than three years from the date of approval**,** or sooner if changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, or operational requirements necessitate it.

The Head of Policy will support this process by identifying relevant changes in legislation, regulation, national standards and emerging best practice. The Head of Policy will also incorporate learning from inspections, audits and practice developments into future revisions whilst overseeing all proposed amendments to the universal content to ensure accuracy, consistency and compliance.

Site Lead approver	**Alison Priddle** ***Alison.Priddle@Cambiangroup.com***
Approval Date	**September 2026**
Next Review Date	**February 2029**
Version Number	**001**



Alison Priddle
Principal

Date 01/09/2026

Terminology

Our aim is to use consistent terminology throughout this policy and all supporting documentation as follows:

Term	Definition
'Establishment' or 'Site'	A generic term referring to the school/college owned by CareTech.
Learner	Any child or young person under the age of 18, or young adult over 18 who receives education.
Service Head	The senior person with overall responsibility for the school/college.
Tutor/Teacher	Members of staff who have teaching responsibility for learners at the school/college.
Parent/Carer	Parent or person with parental responsibility.
Regulatory Authority	The independent regulatory body responsible for inspecting and regulating services (e.g., Ofsted, Estyn, Education Scotland).
Social Worker	The worker allocated to the individual learner; if none is allocated, the Duty Social Worker or Team Manager is responsible.
Placing Authority	The local authority/agency responsible for placing the learner or commissioning the service.
Local Authority	The local authority for the establishment's location.
Staff	All staff working at the location, including employed staff, students on placement, contractors, agency staff, volunteers and proprietors.
SEND/ALN/ASN	Special Educational Needs/Additional Learning Needs/Additional Support Needs

1. Southlands School Profile

We are an Ofsted registered co-education autism specialist day and residential school with an Ofsted registered children's home. We are registered to provide education and care, supported by our multi-disciplinary clinical team, for children and young people aged 7-19 years who have a primary diagnosis of Autism (ASD) or whose profile of need can be successfully supported by the use of autism specialist strategies. Our current cohort is 7-16yr, however, we are able to offer Post-16 and more extended transition arrangements may be considered on an individual basis, where this is appropriate.

The majority of young people have an Education, Health, and Care Plan (EHCP) with their primary special need being ASD and require support to access education, have difficulty initiating or limited social interactions and need support with organisation and problem solving, which can hamper independence. They may typically be working at or above age-related expectations or with moderate/learning difficulties.

They may have a variety of additional special education needs associated with their autism spectrum challenges.

'Supporting each other to flourish!'

Every child at Southlands will be given opportunities to develop, self- compassion, self-respect, respect for others and positive and socially responsible behaviour, enabling them to enjoy success and purpose in their wider communities.

We will achieve this through our unwavering commitment to the highest standards with shared responsibilities between learners, parents, carers, educational providers and other public and voluntary organisations. At Southlands we are "one team" across the education, residential and clinical settings and all staff who work at Southlands understand we are collectively responsible for the academic and social development of every young person. Southlands staff are committed to promoting positive mental well-being to all, students and staff alike.

At the heart of this vision is our Southlands' expectation that all our partners share our ambition and our commitment to work collaboratively, so the needs and aspirations of the children and young people in our learning community are at the centre of everything that we do.

We believe that everyone has a personal best and we work hard to promote learning in a holistic sense and as a lifelong journey. At Southlands we have identified key principles that are important for our school, these values are promoted and embedded within the school curriculum and are the foundation of our ROADS rewards programme.

We believe we should demonstrate the following values:

Kindness - Incorporating kindness into our everyday lives, through actions as well as special acts of kindness, helps create a foundation of compassion, empathy, and

positive behaviour that extends beyond the classroom. It equips children with important life skills that promote their personal growth, meaningful relationships, and positive contributions to the world around them

Respect - Accepting somebody for who they are, even when they're different from you or you don't agree with them Respect in your relationships builds feelings of trust, safety, and wellbeing. Respect doesn't have to come naturally – it is something you earn.

Resilience - Being happy and successful after something difficult or challenging has happened. Being prepared to try again and not giving up.

Safety - Keeping ourselves and others free from harm

Cherish - Really valuing, loving, caring and protecting each other

2. Purpose

This policy applies to **Southlands School**

It sets out how the site manages **Suspension (England) / Permanent Exclusion** and provides a clear organisational framework that:

- Guides all staff
- Supports senior leadership decision-making
- Provides clarity for learners, parents/carers, and external partners
- Ensures consistency across all sites
- Demonstrates compliance with statutory, safeguarding and data protection responsibilities

This policy helps **Southlands School** meet its legal duties, uphold safeguarding responsibilities, and maintain a safe and purposeful environment for learning.

3. Scope

This is an organisational policy that applies across all sites, services and education functions.

It establishes the universal standards that every site must follow.
Each site implements the policy in line with the correct national legislative framework and regulatory requirements, as summarised in **Appendices A**.

4. Local Adaptation Requirement

Sections are adapted locally to Southlands School to reflect local procedures or national equivalents, including (but not limited to):

- Safeguarding frameworks
- Inspection expectations

- Curriculum/quality frameworks
- Local authority reporting routes
- Data protection contacts
- Local governance arrangements

All local content is:

- Accurate
- Up to date
- Fully aligned with the universal standards in this policy
- Consistent with the statutory expectations of the nation in which the site operates

Where no local equivalent exists, the universal content applies in full.

5. Legal and Regulatory Context

Every site operates under the statutory requirements, safeguarding duties and inspection arrangements of its home nation. Universal standards are applied consistently, while national variations are addressed in **Appendices A for Southlands School**

Terminology:

- **England:** *Suspension* (temporary), *Permanent Exclusion* (permanent)

6. Reasons for Suspension/Exclusion

Suspension/Permanent Exclusion is a **last resort** and may only be considered when:

- There is significant damage to property
- Behaviour requires significant intervention and supportive strategies have been exhausted
- There is a serious breach of site behaviour policies
- Allowing the learner to remain on site would seriously harm the education or welfare of the learner or others
- Decisions must be proportionate and evidenced with clear rationale

7. Procedures for Suspending/Excluding a Learner

The **Principal** must:

- Carry out a full, fair investigation and ensure the learner has the opportunity to give their account
- Consider reasonable adjustments for learners with SEND/ALN/ASN
- Consider care-experienced status and safeguarding implications
- Consult relevant staff (but not anyone involved in the review/appeal process)
- Ensure compliance with the Equality Act 2010 and national safeguarding frameworks
- Assess whether the incident was provoked or influenced by contextual factors
- Reach a decision on the balance of probabilities

8. Notification and Appeals Process

Immediate Notification

The site must:

- Contact parents/carers (or the learner if over 18) without delay by telephone
- Follow this with written confirmation within one school day

The written notification must include:

- Dates and duration of the suspension/permanent exclusion
- Reason(s)
- Rights to make representations and appeal
- Key contact details (Principal or Regional Lead)
- Return arrangements and work/learning provision

Appeal Rights and Timescales

- Parents/carers have one week from the date of the letter to submit an appeal in writing
- Appeals will be heard by the Proprietor Representatives, normally within three weeks
- Parents/carers may bring a representative
- All papers relied upon by the school/college must be shared in advance

Access to Records

Parents/carers may request the learner's record. The site must comply within 15 school days — but in suspension/permanent exclusion cases, sites should respond promptly.

Confidentiality

Suspension/Permanent Exclusion cases are confidential and shared only with those who need to know in order to safeguard learners, ensure fairness or meet statutory duties.

9. When Suspension/Exclusion Is Not Appropriate

Suspension/Permanent Exclusion must **never** be used for:

- Minor issues such as incomplete homework
- Poor academic performance
- Lateness or truancy
- Pregnancy
- Situations where the learner is being punished for parental actions

10. Responsibilities Following a Decision

The **Principal** must:

- Notify the learner (and parents/carers, where appropriate)

- Inform relevant professionals (Registered Manager, Social Worker, Virtual School Head, Welfare Lead, Head of Education)
- Ensure SLT communicates key details (type, duration, return arrangements, rights of appeal)
- Send formal written confirmation
- Notify the Local Authority (where required) and complete LA-specific documentation
- Report permanent affecting public examinations to the LA **within one working day**
- For care-experienced learners, notify the placing authority's social services **immediately**

11. Types of Suspension/Exclusion

Permanent Exclusion

Used only for the most serious breaches and when allowing the learner to remain on site would seriously harm the education or welfare of others.

Fixed-Period Suspension

- Must not exceed **45 school days** in a single academic year
- Should be as short as possible (typically **1–3 days**)
- **Indefinite exclusions are unlawful**

Substance or Alcohol-Related Incidents

- Decisions must be consistent with the site's Alcohol and Substance Misuse Policy
- Specialist advice must be sought
- Permanent exclusion considered only in the most serious cases

12. Alternatives to Suspension/Exclusion

Before considering exclusion, sites must explore appropriate alternatives, including:

- Pastoral Support Plans
- Restorative approaches
- Outreach or alternative provision
- Early Help

13. Decision-Making Authority

Only the **Principal** or the most senior leader acting in their absence, may authorise suspension/Permanent Exclusion

This decision is made in consultation with the Regional Lead and cannot be routinely delegated.

14. Education During Exclusion / Suspension

Learning must continue. Sites will:

- Provide physical or digital work
- Share resources via agreed platforms (e.g. secure portals, school websites)
- Expect completed work to be returned for assessment

Refer to the Remote Learning Policy for the full pathway.

Equality Impact Statement

This policy has been developed to promote equality, safeguard individual's rights, and ensure fair and inclusive practice across all services. The potential impact of the policy on children, young people, young adults, families, and staff with protected characteristics has been considered in line with the Equality Act 2010.

No negative impacts have been identified. Staff must apply this policy with sensitivity to individual need and make reasonable adjustments to ensure equitable access, safety, wellbeing, and participation for every individual. Any emerging risks of differential impact should be reported and addressed through ongoing review and quality assurance.

Appendices

Appendix A – Legal and Regulatory Framework in England

Appendix A

Legislation, guidance and regulatory framework underpinning Suspension and Permanent Exclusion in England.

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion: Statutory Guidance (DfE)

- **Means:** Statutory guidance on **suspension (temporary)** and **permanent exclusion** for schools/PRUs, setting definitions, thresholds, notifications, governing board/IRP processes and timescales.
- **Requires:** Headteacher/Principal uses lawful, proportionate processes; issues letters "without delay"; senior leaders meet national deadlines; complete records available for inspectors.
- **Our stance:** England sites follow this guidance in full and use organisation templates that mirror its content and timelines.
- **Implementation example:** Case file contains investigation notes, decision rationale, compliant letters, governing board/IRP minutes, and a reintegration plan.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/school-exclusion

Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE)

- **Means:** Statutory safeguarding guidance for schools and under 18s in colleges; exclusion decisions must align with safeguarding culture, DSL oversight and information-sharing duties.
- **Requires:** DSL review of risk/vulnerability; secure recording; timely referrals where thresholds are met; inspectors triangulate exclusion decisions with safeguarding evidence.
- **Our stance:** DSL/DSP reviews every proposed suspension/exclusion and signs the recorded risk considerations.
- **Implementation example:** Exclusion pack includes DSL risk note and any multi-agency contacts or referrals.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-children-safe-in-education--2

Equality Act 2010: Advice for Schools (DfE)

- **Means:** Departmental guidance on applying Equality Act duties to school decisions, including **non-discrimination** and **reasonable adjustments** relevant to exclusions.
- **Requires:** Decisions explicitly consider protected characteristics and adjustments; inspectors expect written equality reasoning in the decision record.
- **Our stance:** Decision forms include an equality/adjustments checklist completed before confirmation of exclusion.

- **Implementation example:** File shows what adjustments were tried/considered and why exclusion remained proportionate.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/equality-act-2010-advice-for-schools

SEND Code of Practice (0–25)

- **Means:** Statutory guidance on identifying/meeting SEND; requires proper consideration of needs, EHC plans and reasonable adjustments before exclusion.
- **Requires:** Evidence of graduated response and support planning; inspectors check consistency with SEND duties where excluded learners have SEND.
- **Our stance:** England sites evidence the support sequence and, where relevant, EHC links prior to exclusion.
- **Implementation example:** Pack contains SEN plan/EHC excerpts, reviews, and rationale for last-resort decision.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/send-code-of-practice-0-to-25

Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISS)

- **Means:** Legal standards for independent schools, including **welfare, health and safety (Part 3)**, information (Part 6), complaints (Part 7) and leadership (Part 8) relevant to exclusions.
- **Requires:** Written behaviour/exclusion procedures, compliant communications and records, and leadership oversight evidenced for inspection.
- **Our stance:** Policy and evidence are mapped to the relevant ISS Parts for exclusions.
- **Implementation example:** ISS compliance matrix links each exclusion step to Parts 3/6/7/8 and to the site's evidence store.
- **Links:** https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2014/3283

Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

- **Means:** National framework for inspecting education providers (incl. non-association independents and independent FE) covering behaviour, personal development, leadership and safeguarding culture.
- **Requires:** Evidence that exclusions are proportionate/rare, well-recorded, monitored for patterns/disproportionality, and followed by purposeful reintegration.
- **Our stance:** We present an exclusions dashboard, sampling packs and leadership evaluation aligned to EIF judgment areas.
- **Implementation example:** SLT termly report shows trends, equality breakdown and actions taken, ready for inspection.
- **Links:** https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/education-inspection-framework/education-inspection-framework-for-use-from-november-2025