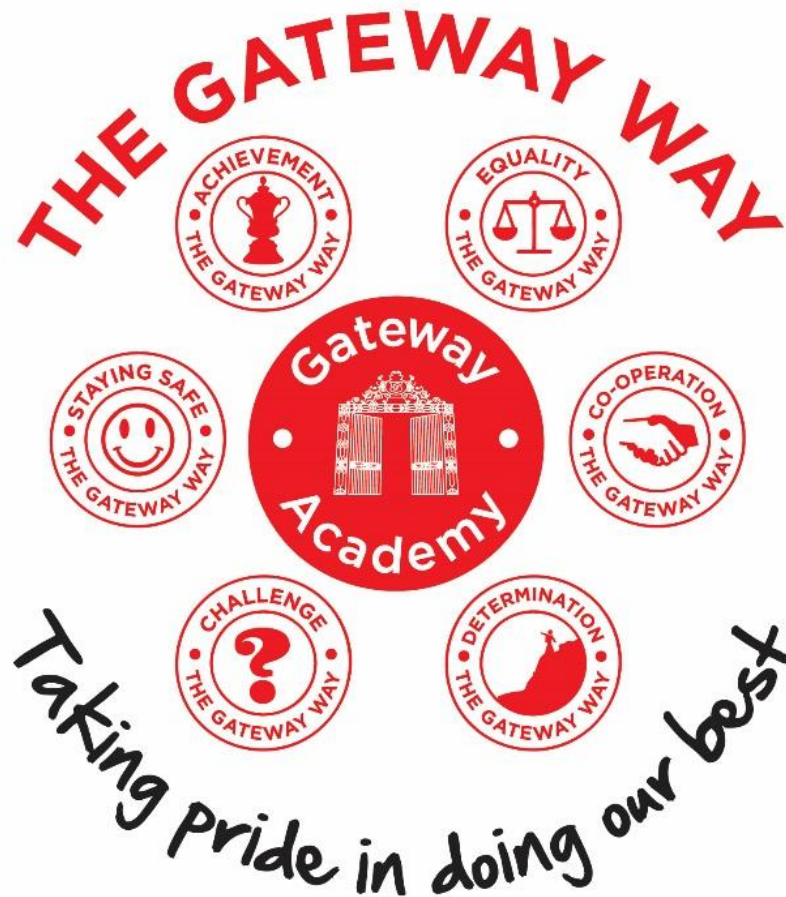


Gateway Academy



Suspension and Permanent Exclusions and Alternative Behaviour Provision Policy

Approved by: Claire Cleary and Lisa Breslin

Last reviewed on: September 2026

INTRODUCTION

Gateway Academy is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and supportive learning environment where every pupil can achieve their full potential. Our behaviour expectations are underpinned by our school values:

Be Kind • Be Safe • Be a Learner

The Academy believes that the vast majority of behaviour can be successfully managed through positive relationships, restorative approaches, high expectations, early intervention and appropriate support.

Suspension and permanent exclusion are serious sanctions and will only be used where all other appropriate strategies have been considered or where the seriousness of an incident makes such action necessary.

The Academy recognises that pupils' behaviour may be influenced by additional needs, adverse childhood experiences, disabilities, mental health needs or safeguarding concerns. Wherever appropriate, these factors will be carefully considered before any decision is made.

The Academy will ensure that all decisions relating to suspension and permanent exclusion are lawful, reasonable, fair, proportionate and consistent with statutory guidance.

Decisions regarding suspension or permanent exclusion will always follow the Academy's three main behaviour principles.

AIMS

The aims of this policy are to:

- ensure all suspensions and permanent exclusions are carried out fairly, consistently and lawfully
- provide clear guidance for staff, governors, parents and pupils regarding statutory procedures
- safeguard the welfare and education of all pupils
- maintain a safe learning environment where everyone can thrive
- ensure pupils continue to receive appropriate education during periods of suspension where required
- promote early intervention to prevent suspension and permanent exclusion wherever possible
- reduce repeat suspensions through effective reintegration planning
- ensure decisions comply fully with equality, safeguarding and SEND legislation
- prevent unlawful exclusion practices, including off-rolling
- ensure all statutory notifications, reviews and record keeping requirements are fulfilled

The Academy is committed to working positively with parents, external agencies and the Local Authority to achieve the best possible outcomes for every pupil.

LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY GUIDANCE

This policy has been written in accordance with the latest statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education and should be read alongside the Academy's Behaviour Policy and Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy.

The policy reflects the requirements of:

- Department for Education: **School suspensions and permanent exclusions** (current statutory guidance)
- Education Act 2002
- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Education Act 1996
- School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012
- Education (Provision of Full-Time Education for Excluded Pupils) (England) Regulations 2007 (as amended)
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 199
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Special Educational Needs and Disability Code of Practice
- Children Act 1989
- Children Act 2004
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (current edition)
- The Academy Trust's Funding Agreement

This policy should also be read alongside the Academy's policies on Behaviour, Safeguarding, SEND, Attendance, Equality, Anti-Bullying and Positive Handling.

This policy complies with the Academy's Funding Agreement and Articles of Association.

PRINCIPLES AND DEFINITIONS

Principles

Suspension and permanent exclusion are serious sanctions and will only be used where they are lawful, reasonable, proportionate and fair, and after appropriate alternatives have been considered, unless the seriousness of the incident makes immediate suspension or permanent exclusion necessary.

Before making any decision, the CoHeadteachers will consider whether:

- the incident has been fully investigated
- the decision is proportionate
- reasonable adjustments have been made where appropriate

- any Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) have been considered
- safeguarding concerns may have contributed to the behaviour
- the pupil has experienced trauma, bereavement or other significant circumstances
- appropriate pastoral or external support has already been provided
- alternative strategies could reasonably prevent exclusion

The Academy recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and will not discriminate against any pupil on the basis of a protected characteristic.

The Academy will not use suspension or permanent exclusion as a substitute for providing appropriate support for pupils with additional needs.

Unlawful Exclusion

Gateway Academy will never use informal or unlawful exclusion practices.

This includes:

- sending a pupil home without formally recording a suspension
- asking parents to keep a child at home without following statutory procedures
- encouraging parents to remove a child from the school roll to avoid suspension or exclusion
- excluding a pupil because additional support is required for SEND
- excluding a pupil because of poor academic attainment
- using suspension as a punishment for non-disciplinary reasons
- requiring attendance at a reintegration meeting before allowing a pupil to return following suspension

The Academy is committed to ensuring that all pupils remain on roll unless removed in accordance with statutory requirements.

Definitions

For the purposes of this policy:

Suspension means a temporary exclusion from the Academy for a fixed period.

Permanent exclusion means the pupil is removed permanently from the Academy roll following a decision by the Headteacher.

Off-site direction means a temporary placement at another educational setting, directed by the Academy, to improve a pupil's behaviour while they remain on the Academy roll.

Safeguarding-related separation refers to circumstances where pupils are required to be kept apart for safeguarding reasons. Such arrangements are not suspensions or permanent exclusions and will not be recorded as such.

Managed move means a voluntary and permanent transfer to another school with the agreement of the parents, both schools and, where appropriate, the Local Authority. Managed moves must not be used as trial admissions or informal exclusions.

Parent includes any person who has parental responsibility or who has day-to-day care of the child.

Headteacher includes the Acting Headteacher where appropriate.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The CoHeadteachers

Only the CoHeadteachers, or in their absence the Acting Headteacher, have the authority to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil on disciplinary grounds.

The CoHeadteachers will ensure that every decision is:

- lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair
- proportionate to the circumstances
- made in accordance with the Academy's Behaviour Policy
- supported by sufficient evidence based on the balance of probabilities
- consistent with the Academy's safeguarding responsibilities and equality duties

Before deciding to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil, the CoHeadteachers will, wherever practicable:

- investigate the incident thoroughly
- consider all available evidence
- allow the pupil an opportunity to explain their version of events
- consider witness statements and other relevant information
- take account of the pupil's age, understanding and individual circumstances
- consider whether the behaviour may have been influenced by SEND, disability, medical needs, mental health, trauma or safeguarding concerns
- consider whether reasonable adjustments have been made where required under the Equality Act 2010
- consider whether alternative strategies or interventions would be appropriate

Permanent exclusion will only be used where:

- there has been a serious breach or persistent breaches of the Academy's Behaviour Policy
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others

The CoHeadteachers are also responsible for ensuring that:

- statutory notifications are completed without delay
- suitable work is provided during the first five school days of a suspension
- appropriate alternative provision is arranged where required
- reintegration arrangements are planned following suspension
- accurate records are maintained

Staff

All staff are expected to:

- promote positive behaviour consistently
- implement the Behaviour Policy fairly
- identify pupils requiring additional support at the earliest opportunity
- report serious incidents promptly
- contribute information to investigations where appropriate
- work with parents and external agencies to reduce the likelihood of suspension or permanent exclusion

Parents and Carers

Parents are expected to:

- work in partnership with the Academy
- support the Academy's Behaviour Policy

- attend meetings where requested
- ensure that a suspended pupil is not present in a public place during school hours during the first five school days of a suspension unless there is a reasonable justification
- engage positively with reintegration planning

Parents have the right to make representations to the Governing Board in accordance with statutory guidance.

Governing Board

The Governing Board is responsible for ensuring that:

- this policy complies with current legislation
- exclusion decisions are reviewed within statutory timescales
- exclusion data is monitored regularly
- equality duties are fulfilled
- appropriate challenge is provided regarding suspension and exclusion patterns

The Governing Board may delegate its responsibilities to a Pupil Discipline Committee consisting of at least three governors.

SUSPENSION PROCEDURES

Decision to Suspend

A suspension may be used where a pupil has seriously breached the Academy's Behaviour Policy and remaining in school would not be appropriate.

Each decision will be considered individually.

The CoHeadteachers will consider:

- the seriousness of the incident
- previous behaviour
- any mitigating circumstances
- whether the behaviour was provoked
- whether the behaviour was linked to SEND, disability or safeguarding concerns
- whether additional support could reasonably prevent future incidents

Suspension will never be imposed automatically for a particular behaviour.

Investigation

Before making a decision, the CoHeadteachers will ensure that appropriate enquiries have been completed.

This may include:

- speaking to the pupil
- obtaining written statements
- reviewing CCTV where available
- considering staff observations
- considering information from parents or external professionals where relevant

The standard of proof is the civil standard: the balance of probabilities.

Informing Parents and Carers

Parents/Carers will be informed without delay, normally by telephone followed by written confirmation.

The written notification will include:

- the reason for the suspension
- the length of the suspension
- the dates on which the suspension begins and ends
- arrangements for education during the suspension
- parents' legal responsibilities during the first five school days
- arrangements for the pupil's return
- parents' right to make representations to the Governing Board
- details of any relevant review process

Where appropriate, information will also be provided in an accessible format.

Education During Suspension

The Academy will provide suitable work for the first five school days of any suspension.

Work will:

- be meaningful and appropriate
- be marked where appropriate
- support continuity of learning
- take account of SEND and individual needs

Where legislation requires alternative provision from the sixth school day, the Academy will work with the Local Authority to ensure this is arranged promptly.

For looked-after children and pupils with a social worker, the Academy will work collaboratively with the Local Authority to secure education as quickly as possible.

Cancelling a Suspension

The CoHeadteachers may cancel a suspension before it has been considered by the Governing Board where this is permitted by statutory guidance.

Where a suspension is cancelled:

- parents will be informed immediately
- the Governing Board and Local Authority will be notified
- the reasons for cancellation will be recorded
- the cancellation will be retained within the Academy's records in accordance with statutory requirements

PERMANENT EXCLUSION PROCEDURES

Permanent exclusion is the most serious sanction available to the Academy.

It will only be used where all statutory criteria have been met.

Permanent exclusion will normally be considered only where:

- there has been a serious breach of the Behaviour Policy
- there have been persistent breaches despite extensive support and intervention;
- allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

Before making a decision, the CoHeadteachers will carefully consider:

- the proportionality of permanent exclusion
- safeguarding responsibilities
- SEND
- disability discrimination duties
- the Public Sector Equality Duty
- any pastoral or external agency involvement
- whether alternative strategies have been exhausted where appropriate

Where permanent exclusion is imposed, the Academy will complete all statutory notifications promptly, including notification to:

- parents
- the Governing Board
- the Local Authority
- the pupil's home Local Authority where different
- the Virtual School Head where applicable
- the pupil's social worker where applicable

Parents will receive written information explaining:

- the reasons for the exclusion
- their rights to make representations
- the Governing Board review process
- their right to request an Independent Review Panel where appropriate
- the availability of an SEN expert during an Independent Review

SAFEGUARDING-RELATED SEPARATION

There may be occasions where the Academy needs to keep pupils apart from one another for safeguarding reasons.

This may occur, for example, following:

- allegations between pupils
- safeguarding investigations
- advice from Children's Social Care or the Police
- risk assessments completed by the Academy
- other circumstances where separation is necessary to protect pupils

Safeguarding-related separation is not a suspension or permanent exclusion and must not be recorded or communicated as such.

Where safeguarding-related separation is implemented, the Academy will:

- ensure the arrangements are proportionate
- review the arrangements regularly
- communicate clearly with parents
- consider the views of relevant safeguarding professionals
- continue to meet the pupil's educational needs

- consider equality duties and reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- maintain accurate records of decisions and reviews

Where separation continues for an extended period, the Academy will keep arrangements under regular review to ensure they remain necessary, proportionate and in the best interests of all pupils.

Safeguarding-related separation will always be implemented alongside the Academy's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy and any relevant risk assessments.

OFF-SITE DIRECTION

Purpose

The Academy may direct a pupil to attend education off-site at another educational setting where this is considered an appropriate intervention to improve behaviour while enabling the pupil to remain on the Academy roll.

Off-site direction is intended to:

- improve a pupil's behaviour
- support successful reintegration into mainstream education
- reduce the likelihood of suspension or permanent exclusion
- provide targeted intervention where this is in the pupil's best interests
- safeguard the education and welfare of all pupils

Off-site direction is not a suspension or permanent exclusion.

The Academy remains responsible for the pupil's education, attendance, safeguarding and welfare throughout the placement.

Decision Making

Before directing a pupil off-site, the CoHeadteachers will consider:

- whether the placement is lawful, reasonable and proportionate
- whether suitable alternative interventions have been considered
- the educational and safeguarding needs of the pupil
- any SEND, disability or medical needs
- advice from relevant professionals where appropriate
- the likely impact on the pupil's education and wellbeing

The Academy will consult with parents wherever reasonably practicable before the placement begins.

Parents will receive written confirmation explaining:

- the reasons for the placement
- the name and address of the alternative provision
- the expected duration
- transport arrangements where applicable
- review arrangements
- expectations for attendance and behaviour

- the planned arrangements for reintegration

Reviews

The Academy will review every off-site direction regularly to ensure it remains:

- appropriate
- proportionate
- in the pupil's best interests

Reviews will consider:

- attendance
- behaviour
- safeguarding
- academic progress
- wellbeing
- whether the placement should continue or end.

Parents and, where appropriate, the pupil will be involved in the review process.

Reintegration

From the outset of any off-site direction, the Academy will develop a reintegration plan.

This will normally include:

- agreed timescales
- identified support
- pastoral provision
- curriculum arrangements
- monitoring arrangements
- review meetings with parents

The Academy will work closely with the alternative provider to support a successful return to mainstream education wherever appropriate.

Managed Moves

A managed move is a voluntary and permanent transfer to another school undertaken with the agreement of:

- the parent
- both schools
- the pupil where appropriate
- the Local Authority where required

Managed moves are intended to provide a positive alternative to permanent exclusion where this is considered to be in the pupil's best interests.

Managed moves must:

- be carefully planned
- be supported by all parties
- be based on informed parental consent

- include appropriate sharing of safeguarding, behaviour, attendance and SEND information
- have clearly agreed transition arrangements

Managed moves must not:

- be used as an unofficial exclusion
- be used to improve the Academy's performance data
- be used as a "trial admission"
- be used to avoid statutory exclusion procedures

Once a managed move has been agreed and completed, responsibility for the pupil transfers to the receiving school.

Reintegration Following Suspension

The Academy is committed to supporting every pupil to make a successful return to school following a suspension.

Reintegration arrangements will aim to:

- repair relationships
- reduce the likelihood of further incidents
- support attendance
- promote positive behaviour
- ensure pupils feel safe and welcomed back into school

Reintegration Meeting

Where appropriate, a reintegration meeting will be held before or on the day the pupil returns to school.

The meeting may include:

- the pupil
- parents
- the CoHeadteachers or senior leader
- relevant pastoral staff
- the SENDCo where appropriate
- other professionals where appropriate

The meeting will consider:

- the reasons for the suspension
- lessons learned
- support required
- any reasonable adjustments
- strategies to prevent recurrence
- attendance expectations
- pastoral support

The Academy recognises that a reintegration meeting is an important opportunity to support pupils and families.

However, attendance at a reintegration meeting will not be made a condition of the pupil returning to school following a suspension.

Reintegration following suspension, off-site direction or safeguarding-related separation support

Support following suspension may include:

- daily check-ins
- mentoring
- restorative conversations
- behaviour support plans
- pastoral support
- emotional wellbeing support
- referral to external agencies
- SEND assessment or review
- Early Help support
- risk assessment where appropriate

Support will be tailored to individual need.

Reintegration planning will also take place following cancelled suspensions or exclusions where appropriate.

Monitoring

Following reintegration, staff will monitor:

- attendance
- punctuality
- behaviour
- wellbeing
- engagement with learning

Parents will be kept informed of progress and additional support will be introduced where necessary.

EDUCATION DURING SUSPENSION

The Academy recognises that pupils should continue to receive education during periods of suspension.

For the first five school days of any suspension, suitable work will be provided.

Learning activities will:

- reflect the curriculum being studied
- be accessible
- be appropriately adapted or differentiated
- be suitable for pupils with SEND where appropriate
- be capable of being completed independently where possible

Teachers will monitor completed work and provide feedback where appropriate.

Where alternative provision is required from the sixth school day, the Academy will work with the Local Authority to ensure suitable full-time education is available in accordance with statutory requirements.

For looked-after children, previously looked-after children where appropriate, pupils with a social worker and vulnerable pupils, the Academy will work collaboratively with the Local Authority, Virtual School Head and other agencies to minimise disruption to education.

The Academy will maintain regular contact with pupils and families during longer periods of suspension to support successful reintegration and continued engagement with learning.

GOVERNING BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The Governing Board has a statutory duty to ensure that suspension and permanent exclusion procedures are carried out fairly, lawfully and in accordance with current Department for Education guidance.

The Governing Board may delegate its responsibilities to a Pupil Discipline Committee comprising at least three governors who have no prior involvement in the case.

The Governing Board will:

- review suspension and permanent exclusion decisions within the statutory timescales
- consider any representations made by parents, the CoHeadteachers and, where appropriate, the pupil
- ensure that decisions are fair, proportionate and procedurally correct
- have regard to the Academy's duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Human Rights Act 1998 and safeguarding legislation
- ensure appropriate consideration has been given to pupils with SEND, disabilities and other vulnerabilities
- monitor patterns and trends in suspensions, permanent exclusions, off-site directions, managed moves and safeguarding-related separation
- challenge leaders where disproportionate outcomes are identified for particular groups of pupils
- review the effectiveness of the Academy's Behaviour Policy and wider behaviour support strategies

Where appropriate, meetings may be held remotely but will only take place where:

- all participants can hear and be heard;
- all participants can participate fully;
- the meeting remains fair and transparent;
- confidentiality can be maintained.

The Governing Board will ensure confidential records of all meetings and decisions are retained.

INDEPENDENT REVIEW PANELS

Where the Governing Board upholds a permanent exclusion, parents have the right to request an Independent Review Panel within the statutory timescale.

The Independent Review Panel will be arranged by the Academy Trust in accordance with statutory requirements.

The Panel will consist of either three or five suitably trained members including:

- a lay chair
- current or former governors
- current or former Headteachers

Panel members and clerks will have received appropriate training within the previous two years.

The Independent Review Panel may:

- uphold the Governing Board's decision
- recommend that the Governing Board reconsiders its decision
- quash the decision and direct the Governing Board to reconsider the exclusion where legal or procedural flaws are identified

Parents may request the attendance of an SEN expert at the review.

Where appropriate, the pupil's social worker, Virtual School Head and other relevant professionals may also contribute to the review process.

Meetings may be held remotely where permitted by statutory guidance and where fairness can be maintained.

The decision of the Independent Review Panel will be communicated in writing, together with the reasons for the decision.

SCHOOL REGISTER

The Academy will maintain the admissions and attendance registers in accordance with the Education (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations.

A pupil's name will only be removed from the admissions register following permanent exclusion once the statutory requirements have been met.

During periods of off-site direction, attendance codes will be recorded in accordance with current Department for Education attendance guidance.

Where required, the Academy will notify the Local Authority when a pupil's name is removed from the admissions register following permanent exclusion.

NOTIFICATION AND RECORD KEEPING

The Academy recognises the importance of maintaining accurate records and ensuring that all statutory notifications are completed promptly.

The CoHeadteachers will ensure that parents are informed without delay of:

- any suspension or permanent exclusion
- the reasons for the decision
- the duration of any suspension
- arrangements for education during the suspension
- reintegration arrangements where appropriate
- rights of representation and review

The Academy will notify, where required:

- the Governing Board
- the Local Authority
- the pupil's home Local Authority where different
- the pupil's social worker
- the Virtual School Head
- alternative providers where appropriate.

Where a suspension or permanent exclusion is cancelled before it has been considered by the Governing Board, the Academy will:

- notify all relevant parties without delay
- record the reasons for the cancellation
- retain an accurate record of the original decision and the subsequent cancellation in accordance with statutory guidance

The Academy will maintain accurate records of:

- suspensions
- permanent exclusions
- cancelled exclusions
- governing board decisions
- Independent Review Panel outcomes
- off-site directions
- safeguarding-related separation
- managed moves
- reintegration arrangements

Records will be retained securely in accordance with the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR), the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Academy's Records Management Policy.

EQUALITY, SEND AND VULNERABLE PUPILS

The Academy is committed to ensuring that suspension and permanent exclusion procedures are implemented fairly and without discrimination.

Before making any decision, the CoHeadteachers will consider:

- whether the pupil has Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)
- whether reasonable adjustments have been made
- whether the behaviour may have been influenced by disability, medical needs or communication difficulties
- safeguarding concerns
- mental health or emotional wellbeing
- adverse childhood experiences or trauma
- any involvement of Children's Social Care
- advice from external professionals where available

The Academy will fulfil its duties under:

- the Equality Act 2010
- the Public Sector Equality Duty
- the SEND Code of Practice
- the Human Rights Act 1998
- Keeping Children Safe in Education

Where appropriate, the Academy will seek advice from:

- the SENDCo

- Educational Psychologists
- Behaviour Support Services
- Children's Social Care
- Early Help Services
- Health professionals
- the Local Authority

Suspension or permanent exclusion will never be used as a substitute for providing appropriate support for pupils with SEND or additional needs.

MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The CoHeadteachers will monitor the implementation of this policy throughout the academic year.

Monitoring will include analysis of:

- the number and length of suspensions
- permanent exclusions
- repeat suspensions
- the year groups suspensions are issued within
- managed moves
- off-site directions
- safeguarding-related separation
- time of day of suspensions
- cancelled exclusions
- reintegration outcomes
- attendance following suspension
- behaviour trends
- protected characteristics
- pupils with SEND
- disadvantaged pupils
- looked-after and previously looked-after children
- pupils with a social worker

Information will be reported to the Governing Board at least termly.

The Governing Board will use this information to:

- identify trends
- monitor equality of outcomes
- evaluate the effectiveness of behaviour strategies
- ensure statutory compliance
- inform future policy development

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner where changes in legislation or statutory guidance require.

LINKED POLICIES

This policy should be read alongside the following Academy policies and procedures:

- Behaviour Policy
- Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy

- SEND Policy and Information Report
- Attendance Policy
- Equality Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Positive Handling Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Supporting Pupils with Medical Conditions Policy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy
- Data Protection Policy

Gateway Academy recognises that suspension and permanent exclusion are not solely behaviour management tools but safeguarding decisions that may have significant implications for a child's education, wellbeing and future outcomes. Every decision will therefore be made with careful consideration of the individual circumstances of the pupil, the safety of others and the Academy's statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

Appendix 1 – Statutory Timescales

Action	Statutory Requirement
Inform parents of suspension/exclusion	Without delay
Provide work during suspension	First five school days
Alternative provision	From the sixth school day (or earlier where required by law)
Governing Board consideration	Within statutory timescales set out in current DfE guidance
Request for Independent Review	Within 15 school days of the Governing Board's decision
Removal from school roll following permanent exclusion	In accordance with statutory regulations

Appendix 2 – Decision-Making Framework

When considering suspension or permanent exclusion, the CoHeadteachers will consider the following questions:

1. Has the incident been fully investigated?
2. Has the pupil had an opportunity to explain their actions?
3. Is there sufficient evidence on the balance of probabilities?
4. Have SEND, disability or medical needs been considered?
5. Have safeguarding concerns been considered?
6. Have reasonable adjustments been made where appropriate?
7. Have alternative strategies been considered?
8. Is the proposed sanction proportionate?
9. Does the decision comply with statutory guidance?
10. Have all notification and recording requirements been identified?

Only after these considerations have been completed will a decision be made.

Appendix 3 – Roles and Responsibilities Checklist

CoHeadteachers

- Make lawful decisions.
- Complete investigations.
- Notify parents and relevant agencies.
- Arrange education during suspension.
- Plan reintegration.
- Maintain accurate records.

Staff

- Promote positive behaviour.
- Report incidents promptly.
- Implement behaviour support consistently.
- Contribute to investigations where required.

Parents

- Work in partnership with the Academy.
- Support reintegration.
- Ensure pupils comply with legal requirements during suspension.
- Engage with support offered.

Governing Board

- Review exclusion decisions.
- Monitor trends and equality.
- Ensure statutory compliance.
- Hold leaders to account.