

The Harington Scheme

Suspension and Exclusion Policy

1. Policy Statement

Harington is committed to providing a safe, inclusive and ambitious learning environment where all students can succeed. The organisation operates within a Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) framework, recognising that behaviour is a form of communication. Through this approach, Harington seeks to reduce the need for restrictive practices, including suspension and exclusion, understand and respond to the underlying causes of behaviour, and enable students to develop independence, self-regulation and positive engagement. Suspension and permanent exclusion are used only as a last resort, or where there is an immediate risk to safety.

2. Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy is informed by relevant legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Statutory Guidance (DfE) 2026
- Behaviour Guidance for Education Settings 2024
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- Working Together to Safeguard Children 2026
- Equality Act 2010
- Children and Families Act 2014
- SEND Code of Practice 2015

3. Links to Other Policies

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

- Behaviour Policy (including Positive Behaviour Support framework)
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Adult Safeguarding Policy (where applicable)
- SEND Policy
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Complaints Policy
- Health and Safety Policy

4. Principles

Behaviour is viewed as a communication of need, and a graduated, proactive approach is used in line with Positive Behaviour Support (PBS). Students are supported to express their views and

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participate in decisions that affect them, while SEND, trauma, communication needs and safeguarding considerations remain central to understanding and responding to behaviour. Reasonable adjustments are always considered, and decisions are made on the balance of probability. Any use of exclusion is proportionate, lawful and regarded as a last resort. Informal exclusions are not permitted under any circumstances.

5. Positive Behaviour Support

Harington implements Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) through individualised behaviour support plans, the adaptation of environments to reduce triggers, and the teaching of alternative and positive behaviours. Staff use consistent, relational approaches to support students, while data is used to monitor patterns and inform interventions. This work is strengthened through multi-disciplinary collaboration with internal and external professionals and active partnership with parents and carers. Exclusion will not be used solely because a student's needs are complex or require additional support.

6. Early Intervention and Risk Reduction

Where behaviours of concern arise, Harington will make every effort to identify and understand any underlying causes, including anxiety, communication difficulties or sensory needs. Support strategies will be reviewed and adjusted as necessary, with parents and carers involved throughout the process. Where possible and appropriate, additional support and monitoring will be put in place, and multi-agency or review meetings will be convened when required.

Harington will act early to prevent escalation through targeted support and pastoral intervention, the review of individual plans and reasonable adjustments, increased monitoring and reporting, and, where appropriate, an early review of an Education, Health and Care (EHC) Plan. Where risks increase, a placement may be identified as "at risk", triggering enhanced planning, closer monitoring and multi-agency review to ensure appropriate support is in place.

Exclusion will not be used as a substitute for appropriate provision or support. Harington will seek to address concerns through assessment, intervention, reasonable adjustments and partnership working before exclusion is considered, except where there is an immediate risk to safety.

7. Additional Processes for Students with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP)

Harington recognises its statutory responsibilities for students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs) and will ensure that all exclusion processes are closely aligned with SEND legislation and guidance. For students with an EHCP, Harington will ensure that the provision specified within the plan is being delivered effectively, review and adapt support strategies in line with Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), work closely with parents and carers, the Local

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Authority and relevant professionals, and consider whether additional or alternative provision may be required to meet the student's needs.

Where a student with an EHCP is at risk of suspension or exclusion, Harington will seek an early (emergency) annual review where concerns suggest that needs may have changed or that current provision is no longer appropriate. Harington will share evidence of behaviour, support strategies and interventions that have been implemented, and will work with the Local Authority, parents and carers, and relevant professionals to review outcomes, provision and placement. An emergency annual review may be triggered by repeated suspensions, an escalation in behaviour despite PBS interventions, increased risk to the student or others, or concerns that the current placement is no longer appropriate. The purpose of the review is to reassess needs and provision, consider reasonable adjustments or additional support, and determine whether a change of placement may be required.

Where a student with an EHCP is suspended or permanently excluded, the Local Authority will be notified without delay and Harington will contribute fully to any review of the EHCP. In cases of permanent exclusion, the Local Authority will be responsible for reviewing and amending the EHCP to name an appropriate alternative placement. Harington will provide all relevant information to support transition planning and help ensure continuity of support for the student.

8. Types of Exclusion

8.1 Suspension (Fixed-Term)

A suspension is a temporary removal from Harington.

It will only be used where:

- PBS strategies have been implemented, and risk remains, or
- There is an immediate safety concern.

Harington will:

- Inform parents/carers immediately and in writing.
- Provide work for the student.
- Hold a reintegration meeting.

8.2 Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is the removal of a student from Harington roll.

This will only occur:

- Following a graduated PBS approach where risks remain unmanageable; or
- In response to a serious one-off incident

Harington will:

- Inform parents/carers and relevant agencies immediately.
- Notify the Local Authority
- Support transition planning and EHCP review where applicable.

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9. Reasons for Suspension or Exclusion

A decision may be taken where:

- There is a serious or persistent breach of the behaviour policy despite PBS support; and/or
- The student's presence would seriously harm the safety, education or welfare of others.

Examples include:

- Physical assault or serious aggression
- Threatening or abusive behaviour
- Severe or persistent bullying
- Discriminatory abuse
- Possession or use of prohibited items or substances
- Serious damage to property
- Persistent unsafe behaviour or absconding

Permanent exclusion may be considered immediately for:

- Serious violence or threats
- Sexual assault
- Supplying illegal drugs
- Carrying offensive weapons
- Arson

Please note that these lists are not exhaustive.

10. Decision-Making Process

Only the CEO/Principal (or authorised senior leader) can exclude a student.

Before making a decision, they will:

- Review PBS strategies and support already in place.
- Consider further reasonable adjustments.
- Assess whether behaviour is linked to unmet need.
- Consider whether an annual emergency review is required (for EHCP students)
- Investigate thoroughly and consider all evidence.
- Allow students to give their account
- Consider safeguarding and contextual factors

Each case is considered on an individual basis.

11. Communication

Parents and carers will be informed of any suspension or exclusion without delay and will receive written confirmation setting out the reasons for the decision, the duration of the

suspension or whether the exclusion is permanent, their right to make representations or appeal, and details of the educational arrangements that will be put in place.

Where relevant, Harington will also notify other agencies and professionals involved in supporting the student. This may include the Local Authority, social workers and, in the case of apprentices, employers, to ensure that all appropriate parties are informed and able to contribute to any necessary support and planning arrangements.

12. Reintegration

Reintegration is a key measure of success within Harington's Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approach. Following a suspension, Harington will hold a reintegration meeting with the student and, where appropriate, their parents or carers, to review the circumstances leading to the suspension and plan for a successful return. Behaviour support strategies will be reviewed and updated as necessary, and a phased or adjusted return may be implemented where this is considered beneficial. The student's progress will be monitored closely to ensure that appropriate support is in place and to reduce the risk of further incidents.

13. Governance and Oversight

The governing body will monitor the use of suspensions and exclusions to ensure that they are lawful, proportionate and consistent with the principles set out in this policy. Senior leaders will regularly review behaviour, suspension and exclusion data to identify patterns, trends and any areas requiring further action or support. The implementation and effectiveness of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) will also be evaluated on a regular basis to ensure that practice remains effective, evidence-based and focused on improving outcomes for students.

14. Review and Appeals

14.1 Review

A review of any permanent exclusion will be undertaken by a panel of trustees who have had no prior involvement in the decision-making process. The review will normally be convened by the Chair of Trustees within 15 school days of the exclusion decision being confirmed. The panel will consider whether the correct procedures were followed, whether Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) approaches and reasonable adjustments were appropriately implemented, whether relevant Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) processes were followed, and whether the decision was lawful, reasonable and proportionate in the circumstances.

14.2 Appeals

A student (and or parent/ carer) who is suspended or excluded may appeal the decision by submitting written grounds of appeal to the Principal (or nominated officer) within five working days of receiving the decision.

The appeal will be heard by an Appeal Panel comprising individuals who were not involved in the original investigation or decision. Wherever possible, the panel will include trustees and may include an independent member.

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The student may attend the hearing and may be accompanied by a parent, carer, advocate or other representative.

The panel will consider whether:

- the investigation was conducted fairly;
- the evidence supported the decision;
- the sanction was proportionate;
- reasonable adjustments and the learner's individual needs were properly considered.

The panel may uphold the decision, overturn it, or substitute an alternative outcome. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final within the organisation.

15. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it remains compliant with current legislation, statutory guidance and best practice. As part of this process, Harington will monitor the use of suspensions and exclusions, evaluate their relationship to the implementation and effectiveness of Positive Behaviour Support (PBS), review outcomes for students with Education, Health and Care Plans (EHCPs), and analyse the use and impact of annual and emergency reviews. This monitoring will support continuous improvement, promote positive outcomes for students, and ensure that Harington continues to meet its duties under SEND legislation and guidance.

Appendix: Exclusion Process

1. Early Concerns Identified

- Behaviour of concern emerges
- PBS strategies reviewed and implemented
- Triggers and functions of behaviour assessed
- Parents/carers informed and involved

2. Increased Support (PBS Graduated Response)

- Behaviour support plan updated
- Additional interventions introduced
- Multi-disciplinary input increased
- Monitoring and data collection intensified

3. Placement at Risk

- Concerns escalate despite support
- Placement identified as “**at risk**”
- Local Authority informed (for EHCP students)
- Multi-agency meeting arranged

4. Consideration of EHCP Review

- Decision made whether to request:
 - **Early Annual Review**, or
 - **Emergency Annual Review**

Triggered by:

- Repeated suspensions
- Escalating risk
- Evidence provision may no longer meet need

5. Annual / Emergency Review Held

- Review of needs, provision and outcomes
- Evidence from PBS strategies considered
- Consideration of:
 - Additional support
 - Reasonable adjustments
 - Change of placement

6. Decision Point

Option A: Needs Can Be Met

- Adjust provision and support
- Continue placement
- Monitor closely

Option B: Needs Cannot Be Met

- Local Authority considers alternative placement
- Transition planning begins

7. Suspension (if required at any stage)

- Used only where risk cannot be safely managed
- Reintegration plan developed
- PBS strategies reviewed and strengthened

8. Permanent Exclusion (Last Resort)

- Only after:
 - PBS approaches exhausted, or
 - Serious one-off incident
- Local Authority notified immediately

9. Post-Exclusion (EHCP Students)

- Local Authority must:
 - Review and amend EHCP
 - Name new placement
- Harington provides transition information

Key Principles Throughout

- PBS underpins every stage
- Behaviour is understood as communication
- Exclusion is never used instead of providing support
- Student voice and parent/carer involvement are central
- Decisions are evidence-based and proportionate