



NEWMAN CATHOLIC TRUST

HEART SPEAKS TO HEART



Suspensions & Permanent Exclusions Policy

2025-26

Review

Review Cycle	Date of Policy	Reviewed by	Review Date
Annual			

Ratification

Role	Name	Signature	Date
Chair of Board	Chris Izuka		October 2025
CEO	Dr Daniel Doyle		October 2025

Commitment to Equality:

The Trust and its schools are committed to providing a positive working environment which is free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination and any form of harassment, bullying or victimisation. We have developed a number of key policies to ensure that the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in relation to human dignity and dignity in work become embedded into every aspect of school life and these policies are reviewed regularly in this regard.

"Rooted in faith, we ignite a love of learning, foster inclusive education and empower every individual to achieve their utmost potential."

At the Newman Catholic Trust, we stand united in our unwavering mission to nurture a transformative educational experience, where every child is seen, valued, and cherished as a unique gift from God. Rooted in faith, we ignite a love for learning that awakens curiosity, sparks imagination, and fuels a lifelong journey of discovery.

Guided by the teachings of Christ and inspired by the profound wisdom of our namesake, Saint John Henry Newman, we strive to foster a community where inclusion is lived, diversity is embraced, and every individual is empowered to fulfil their highest potential. As Newman said, *"To live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often."* We believe that education is a sacred journey of continual transformation—intellectually, spiritually, and personally. We believe that true education is not just about knowledge, but about shaping hearts and minds, cultivating resilience, and nurturing the whole person.

Our vision is simple yet profound: To be a beacon of **Hope** and **Excellence**, where pupils are not only academically accomplished but spiritually enriched and personally inspired to make a difference in the world.

In all that we do, we seek to embody our Trust's **HEART Values**, which define who we are and guide how we serve:

- **Hope** – Believing in the boundless potential of every child, and striving to build a future filled with possibility, courage and faith.
- **Excellence** – Pursuing the highest standards in learning, leadership and love, so that every action reflects our calling to greatness.
- **Authenticity** – Living truthfully and faithfully, ensuring our words, actions and decisions are grounded in integrity and the Gospel.
- **Responsibility** – Caring for one another and for creation with compassion, stewardship and a deep sense of duty to the common good.
- **Truth** – Seeking wisdom and understanding through Christ, who is the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Together, **Heart to Heart and Hand in Hand**, we build communities of faith and learning where every child flourishes — intellectually, spiritually and morally — for the greater glory of God.

Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

1. Aims and Values

At the Newman Catholic Trust, we believe that every child is made in the image and likeness of God and is deserving of dignity, love, and the opportunity to thrive. Our mission — *Heart to Heart, Hand in Hand* — calls us to nurture environments where minds flourish with knowledge, hearts resonate with faith, and hands build a lasting kingdom of love.

Exclusion, whether fixed-term (suspension) or permanent, is a measure of last resort. It is only used when all other strategies have been exhausted and when necessary to protect the learning, safety, or welfare of others. Our approach is rooted in Gospel values and in our Trust HEART framework:

- **Hope:** We seek restorative solutions that enable growth, forgiveness, and fresh starts.
- **Excellence:** We apply consistent, rigorous processes to ensure fairness and clarity in every decision.
- **Authenticity:** We act with integrity, ensuring decisions are transparent, well-reasoned, and compassionate.
- **Responsibility:** We safeguard each pupil's right to education and ensure our actions serve the good of all.
- **Truth:** We uphold justice and honesty, recognising that true transformation begins with understanding and reconciliation.

We aim to:

- Embed the principles of the *Trust Behaviour and Positive Handling Policy* consistently across all schools.
- Promote early intervention, inclusion, and personalised support to prevent exclusion.
- Ensure that every decision to exclude is lawful, reasonable, proportionate, and clearly recorded.
- Safeguard the dignity, wellbeing, and educational future of every pupil.
- Maintain safe, ordered, and loving environments where all can flourish.
- Fulfil our moral and legal duties, particularly to those who are most vulnerable.

2. Legislation and Statutory Guidance

This policy reflects statutory guidance and must be read alongside:

- *DfE (2023): Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement*
- *Sections 51A–51D Education Act 2002* (as amended by the Education Act 2011)
- *The School Discipline (Pupil Exclusions and Reviews) (England) Regulations 2012*
- *Sections 64–68 School Standards and Framework Act 1998*
- *The Equality Act 2010*
- *The Human Rights Act 1998* (Section 6)
- *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)*

3. Principles for Preventing Exclusions

Across the Newman Catholic Trust, exclusion will always be a **last resort**. Our schools are committed to supporting children to remain in education and to addressing the root causes of behaviour.

We will actively prevent exclusions by:

- Identifying and supporting pupils at risk through early pastoral or SEND intervention.
- Providing access to internal and external support services.
- Implementing and reviewing personalised behaviour and support plans.
- Considering carefully the influence of unmet needs, trauma, or safeguarding factors.
- Working in close partnership with parents and carers.
- Using restorative and relational approaches to repair harm and rebuild trust.

- Promoting a culture of inclusion, respect, and high expectations for all.

4. Decision to Exclude

A decision to exclude a pupil carries significant moral and educational weight. Exclusion will only ever be used when:

- There has been a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's *Behaviour and Positive Handling Policy*, **and**
- Allowing the pupil to remain would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

Authority to Exclude

Only the Principal (or Acting Principal in their absence, with written delegation) may authorise an exclusion.

Principles

All exclusion decisions must:

- Be lawful, proportionate, and fair.
- Take account of the pupil's context, including SEND or safeguarding considerations.
- Be supported by clear evidence and recorded reasoning.
- Be reported to the Local Governing Committee (LGC) and the Trust Board through established governance channels.

Exclusions will never be used:

- For minor breaches of discipline or uniform expectations (unless linked to wider defiance).
- As a substitute for early intervention, pastoral support, or reasonable adjustment.
- In response to behaviour directly arising from a recognised and unmet need.

5. Safeguarding Considerations

Before confirming a suspension or permanent exclusion, the Principal must consider the potential impact on the pupil's welfare and ensure that the decision does not compromise safeguarding. Where a pupil is subject to a Child Protection or Child in Need Plan, or is known to Social Care or the Virtual School, the Principal will liaise with those agencies before final confirmation. If there is any concern that the exclusion may place the pupil at risk, a safeguarding referral will be made in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)* and Trust safeguarding procedures.

Off-Rolling

The Trust affirms that off-rolling is unlawful. No school will, under any circumstances, request, encourage, or pressure a parent to remove their child from the school roll as an alternative to suspension or permanent exclusion. Any such practice would be contrary to our values and statutory duties.

Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is reserved for the most serious circumstances and will only be considered when:

- A single incident of exceptionally serious conduct makes the pupil's continued presence in school untenable; or
- A persistent pattern of serious misconduct presents a sustained risk to the learning, safety, or welfare of others, and all reasonable support and reintegration strategies have been exhausted.

Transparency and Accountability

All decisions to suspend or exclude will be recorded in writing, setting out:

- The rationale for the decision;
- Evidence considered;
- Support and reasonable adjustments attempted; and
- The reasoning demonstrating that exclusion is both necessary and proportionate.

These records will be reviewed through Local Governing Committee monitoring and Trust governance processes to ensure fairness, consistency, and compliance across all schools.

6. Vulnerable Groups and Equality Duties

At the Newman Catholic Trust, we hold steadfast to the belief that every child is a unique and unrepeatable gift of God, deserving of dignity, compassion, and the opportunity to flourish. Guided by our HEART values, we ensure that all decisions relating to suspension or permanent exclusion are taken with profound care, fairness, and humanity.

We recognise that exclusion can have far-reaching consequences, and we are therefore committed to equity, inclusion, and the protection of those who are most vulnerable. Decisions must never discriminate on the grounds of any protected characteristic under the *Equality Act 2010* and must always uphold the principle of the **common good** — ensuring that justice for one does not come at the expense of mercy for another.

Particular attention must be given to pupils who may face additional barriers, including:

- Pupils with identified or suspected SEND or an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP).
- Pupils with a social worker, or those subject to Child in Need (CIN) or Child Protection (CP) plans.
- Looked After and Previously Looked After Children (LAC/PLAC).
- Pupils known to the Virtual School or other support agencies.
- Pupils from groups nationally over-represented in exclusion data.
- Pupils experiencing mental health difficulties, trauma, adverse childhood experiences, or contextual vulnerability.

Before authorising any exclusion, the Principal must:

- Demonstrate that all reasonable adjustments and personalised support strategies have been implemented, reviewed, and recorded.
- Ensure that relevant professionals — such as the SENDCo, Educational Psychologist, Virtual School Head, or Social Worker — have been consulted where appropriate.
- Consider whether the behaviour in question may be an expression of unmet need, distress, or safeguarding risk.
- Ensure that the exclusion decision is demonstrably proportionate, rooted in justice, and compliant with both statutory and Trust guidance.

The Trust will monitor all suspension and exclusion data carefully, analysing trends by pupil group, protected characteristic, and vulnerability profile. Findings will be scrutinised at Local Governing Committee and Board level to ensure that our schools remain inclusive communities of belonging, hope, and fairness.

In line with our HEART values:

- **Hope** inspires us to believe that every child can change and grow.
- **Excellence** calls us to high standards in both care and conduct.
- **Authenticity** demands transparency in every decision.
- **Responsibility** requires us to act with moral courage and compassion.
- **Truth** reminds us that fairness and mercy must walk hand in hand.

7. Informing Parents and Carers

We believe that genuine partnership with families is at the heart of Catholic education. When a suspension or permanent exclusion is being considered, communication must be marked

not only by clarity but by compassion — reflecting our duty to uphold the dignity of both the child and their family.

Parents and carers will be informed:

- **Immediately**, by telephone or in person where possible; and
- **In writing**, on the same day the decision is made.

Written communication will:

- State the reason(s) for the suspension or exclusion, with reference to relevant policies and expectations.
- Clarify the type and duration of the sanction.
- Outline the right to make representations to the Local Governing Committee.
- Explain legal responsibilities regarding attendance during the first five school days of a suspension.
- Confirm arrangements for alternative provision (from day six for permanent exclusions, or sooner where appropriate).

For permanent exclusions, the letter will also provide:

- Details of the right to request an Independent Review Panel (IRP).
- Information on how to request the appointment of an SEN expert, free of charge.
- Contact details for further advice and representation.

All communication must be **clear, accessible, and pastoral in tone**. It should recognise that exclusion can be distressing for families and must therefore be written in a way that invites understanding, reconciliation, and support. The Principal (or delegated senior leader) will offer to meet with parents and carers to discuss the decision, explore next steps, and maintain constructive relationships centred on the child's welfare.

In all cases, communication with families should reflect the Trust's mission to *see Christ in every child*, ensuring that even at moments of difficulty, families experience our schools as places of care, integrity, and hope.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

Our collective responsibility in the Newman Catholic Trust is to act with integrity, compassion, and accountability in every decision that affects a child's education and dignity. Each role within the Trust contributes uniquely to ensuring that suspensions and exclusions are used lawfully, proportionately, and in line with both statutory guidance and our Gospel mission.

Principals

Principals hold delegated authority from the Trust Board to make suspension or permanent exclusion decisions within their schools.

They must:

- Ensure all decisions comply with statutory requirements, the *Trust Behaviour and Positive Handling Policy*, and this policy.
- Demonstrate fairness, proportionality, and pastoral discernment in each case.
- Consider the child's context, safeguarding status, and wellbeing before confirming any decision.
- Inform parents or carers immediately, followed by written confirmation on the same day.
- Notify the Local Governing Committee (LGC) and Local Authority within statutory timescales.
- Record and report all suspensions and exclusions on the Trust-approved system and through their termly Principal's Report.

- Lead the reintegration process following suspension, ensuring restorative practice and renewed belonging.

Principals act not merely as administrators of discipline, but as *leaders of formation*, ensuring that even difficult moments serve the growth and dignity of the child.

Local Governing Committees (LGCs)

Each Local Governing Committee upholds justice and fairness on behalf of the Trust community.

The LGC will:

- Establish a sub-committee of at least three trained governors to consider reinstatement and review cases within statutory timescales.
- Ensure that every decision is lawful, procedurally fair, and consistent with the Trust's HEART values.
- Record and communicate all decisions transparently to parents, the Principal, and the Local Authority.
- Monitor patterns of suspensions and exclusions termly, identifying trends and vulnerable groups.
- Report findings and concerns to the *Standards and Outcomes Committee (SOC)* to support Trust-wide learning and accountability.

Governors act as stewards of fairness, ensuring that every decision reflects both compassion and the safeguarding of the wider school community.

Trust Board

The Board of Directors carries ultimate responsibility for ensuring consistency, justice, and mission alignment across all schools in the Trust.

The Board will:

- Oversee the application of this policy through the SOC and ensure it is implemented faithfully in every school.
- Review Trust-wide data on suspensions and exclusions to ensure equity and proportionality.
- Hold Principals and Local Governing Committees to account for patterns of practice, ensuring no group of pupils is disproportionately affected.
- Ensure alignment with the Trust's HEART values and Catholic Social Teaching, particularly regarding the dignity of each child and the common good.
- Approve and review this policy annually, responding to national updates or diocesan guidance as required.

In this way, the Board ensures that justice, mercy, and accountability coexist within a governance structure rooted in faith and integrity.

Local Authorities

Local Authorities (LAs) retain statutory duties in relation to permanently excluded pupils.

They must:

- Arrange suitable full-time education from day 6 of a permanent exclusion.
- Convene and administer Independent Review Panels (IRPs) as required by law.
- Provide parents and carers with clear information on their rights and responsibilities.

The Trust will cooperate fully with each LA to ensure that provision and communication meet all statutory requirements.

8. Considering Reinstatement

Reinstatement processes are not simply procedural; they are opportunities to reassert justice, reconciliation, and hope. Every panel must act with the intention of discerning what is right, not merely what is compliant.

An LGC sub-committee will meet to consider reinstatement:

- **Within 15 school days** of receiving notice of a permanent exclusion.
- For **suspensions totalling more than 15 days** in a term.
- Where the exclusion would cause a pupil to miss a **public examination**.
- **Within 50 school days** (at parental request) for suspensions totalling over 5 days but fewer than 15 in a term.

The panel will:

- Evaluate whether the decision to suspend or exclude was lawful, reasonable, and procedurally fair.
- Review whether all relevant evidence, adjustments, and support were considered.
- Hear representations from parents, the Principal, and any relevant professionals.
- Make its decision based on the balance of probabilities, documenting its reasoning clearly.

Possible outcomes:

- Uphold the decision (decline reinstatement).
- Direct reinstatement immediately or from a specified date.

Parents, the Principal, and the Local Authority will receive written notification of the panel's decision and reasons without delay.

Every reinstatement meeting should begin and end with the recognition that our task is not merely to determine policy compliance, but to discern what best serves the dignity and future of the child within a community of safety and learning.

9. Independent Review

Parents or carers may request an **Independent Review Panel (IRP)** within 15 school days of receiving the LGC's decision not to reinstate their child.

The Local Authority will convene the IRP, which will consist of:

- A **Lay Member (Chair)** – not employed by a school.
- A **Governor** – who has served for at least 12 months within the last 5 years and is not currently or previously employed as a teacher or headteacher.
- A **Former Headteacher or Principal** – who has served within the past 5 years.

Members must be impartial and trained in exclusion law, equality duties, and child safeguarding.

The IRP may:

- Uphold the LGC's decision.
- Recommend that the LGC reconsiders reinstatement.
- Quash the decision and direct reconsideration if it finds the process legally flawed.

In all cases, written confirmation will be issued to parents, the school, and the Trust.

Throughout this process, the Trust and its schools will continue to uphold the values of transparency, fairness, and compassion. Even when exclusions are upheld, we remain committed to the child's ongoing welfare and to supporting their next educational steps in partnership with families and the Local Authority.

10. School Registers and Attendance Coding

A pupil's name will be removed from roll when:

- 15 school days have passed since the LGC's decision not to reinstate and no IRP has been requested; or
- Parents have confirmed in writing they will not request an IRP.

Attendance coding must follow DfE guidance:

- **Code B/D:** alternative provision attendance.
- **Code E:** absent and not attending alternative provision.

11. Reintegration after a Suspension

Reintegration is a vital act of pastoral care, enabling forgiveness, reconciliation, and renewed belonging. It reflects our belief that every child can change and grow when supported with compassion, structure, and clear expectations.

Each school will:

- **Hold a reintegration meeting** before the pupil returns, attended by the pupil, parents or carers, and a senior leader. The SENDCo or pastoral lead will attend where additional needs or vulnerability are identified.
- **Develop a short Reintegration Plan** outlining the reasons for suspension, lessons learned, and the strategies that will help the pupil succeed. This plan should set clear expectations, identify supportive measures, and include review dates.
- **Include restorative dialogue** where relationships have been affected, enabling mutual understanding and reconciliation.
- **Provide ongoing pastoral support and monitoring** to sustain positive behaviour and rebuild confidence.

Reintegration must always embody the Trust's HEART values — **Hope** for renewal, **Excellence** in process, **Authenticity** in reflection, **Responsibility** for growth, and **Truth** in reconciliation — ensuring that every return to school is a new beginning grounded in dignity and faith.

12. Monitoring and Review

- Principals will report termly exclusion data to their LGC and the Trust Board via the SOC.
- The CEO will review Trust-wide data annually to ensure consistency, proportionality, and equity.
- The policy will be reviewed annually, or earlier if statutory guidance changes.

13. Links to Other Policies

- Behaviour & Positive Handling Policy
- Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy
- SEND and Inclusion Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Attendance Policy