

Liberty in the Wild Ltd

Behaviour Policy

Including Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy

Applies to: The Woodland, The Wilderness and The Wild Meadow



Date created: 03 March 2026

Review date: 03.03.2027

1. Policy Statement

Liberty in the Wild Ltd is a trauma-responsive alternative provision committed to creating safe, calm and purposeful learning environments where pupils feel secure, respected and ready to learn.

This policy applies across all provisions: The Woodland, The Wilderness and The Wild Meadow.

We recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and that many of our pupils may have experienced trauma, disrupted education, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) or unmet special educational needs. Our approach prioritises safety, emotional regulation, relational repair and early intervention. We maintain high expectations for behaviour, supported by consistent boundaries and strong, trusting relationships.

All decisions regarding suspension or permanent exclusion are lawful, reasonable, proportionate and fair, and are made in accordance with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education, including *Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England* (September 2023). Leaders ensure that exclusion is used only as a last resort and that vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND, are not disproportionately affected.

2. Statutory Framework

This policy is informed by:

- DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (September 2023)
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (current edition)

We adopt statutory expectations placed on schools and PRUs to ensure best practice and safeguarding compliance.

3. Trauma-Responsive Approach

We prioritise regulation before sanction and consistently use co-regulation strategies, predictable routines and restorative conversations to support pupils in managing their emotions and behaviour. Staff are trained to recognise signs of dysregulation and respond in a calm, measured and proportionate manner.

Adults consciously separate the child from the behaviour, seeking to understand underlying triggers, unmet needs or contextual factors before determining consequences. Decisions are informed by knowledge of the pupil's individual circumstances, including trauma history, SEND, safeguarding factors and any protected characteristics.

In line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (Suspension and Permanent Exclusion, 2023), sanctions are reasonable, proportionate and applied consistently. Before any serious sanction, including suspension, leaders consider contributing factors, including whether behaviour may be linked to a disability.

In accordance with the Equality Act 2010, reasonable adjustments are made for pupils with disabilities or additional needs. We ensure that disciplinary measures do not directly or indirectly discriminate against pupils on the basis of protected characteristics. Sanctions are never humiliating, degrading or emotionally harmful, and practices that undermine dignity or psychological safety are not used under any circumstances.

4. Promoting Positive Behaviour

We promote positive behaviour through:

- Strong key adult relationships**
- Personalised learning pathways**
- Clear routines and boundaries**
- Emotional literacy teaching**
- Regulation spaces**
- Recognition of effort and progress**

Early intervention is prioritised to prevent escalation of behaviour. Staff actively identify emerging concerns, triggers and patterns of dysregulation so that appropriate support can be implemented at the earliest opportunity.

This may include increased key adult support, adjustments to the learning environment or timetable, updates to behaviour support plans, restorative conversations, or engagement with parents/carers and relevant professionals. Where appropriate, external agencies may be consulted to ensure that pupils receive the support they need.

By intervening early and responding to underlying needs, Liberty in the Wild Ltd aims to reduce the likelihood of serious incidents, suspension or permanent exclusion, ensuring that pupils remain engaged in education wherever possible.

5. Responding to Behaviour

Responses are proportionate and educational. They may include:

- Verbal reminder
- Regulation break
- Restorative conversation
- Reflection task
- Reparation of harm
- Temporary removal from activity
- Behaviour agreement
- Parental engagement

Serious incidents are recorded promptly and accurately and are reviewed by senior leaders to ensure consistency, proportionality and fairness. Leaders evaluate the context of the incident, including safeguarding considerations, SEND status, trauma history and any protected characteristics, before determining next steps.

Incident records are analysed over time to identify patterns, emerging risks or disproportionality. This oversight supports early intervention, informs staff training and ensures that responses align with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (Suspension and Permanent Exclusion, 2023), as well as our duties under the Equality Act 2010.

This process ensures that behaviour systems are applied consistently across The Woodland, The Wilderness and The Wild Meadow, and that exclusion is used only where lawful, reasonable and proportionate.

6. Legal Threshold for Suspension or Permanent Exclusion

A pupil may be suspended or permanently excluded only where:

- There has been a serious breach of the Behaviour Policy; and/or
- Allowing the pupil to remain in the provision would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others.

In accordance with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (*Suspension and Permanent Exclusion, 2023*), exclusion will only be used as a last resort and where it is lawful, reasonable and proportionate.

Before making a decision, the Directors will consider all relevant factors, including:

- The pupil's age and individual circumstances
- SEND status and any EHCP provision
- Whether the behaviour may be linked to a disability
- Safeguarding considerations
- The impact on other pupils and staff
- Whether reasonable adjustments have been made
- Whether alternative strategies have been exhausted

The decision to suspend or permanently exclude rests solely with the Directors and will not be delegated. Decisions will be evidence-based, formally recorded and communicated to parents/carers and commissioning bodies without delay.

7. Suspension Procedure

Stage 1 – Incident occurs and is recorded.

Stage 2 – Senior leader reviews facts, SEND status, safeguarding and proportionality.

Stage 3 – Director determines outcome.

Stage 4 – Parents/carers informed immediately and in writing.

Stage 5 – Work provided from day one.

Stage 6 – Reintegration meeting held before return.

Stage 7 – Monitoring and review of behaviour plan.

8. Permanent Exclusion

Permanent exclusion is an absolute last resort and will only be considered where all reasonable alternatives have been explored and exhausted, or where a serious one-off incident warrants such a response.

In line with statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education (*Suspension and Permanent Exclusion*, 2023), leaders will ensure that the decision is lawful, reasonable, proportionate and fair.

Before permanently excluding a pupil, leaders will:

- Review the pupil's SEND status and any Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) provision
- Consider whether the behaviour may be linked to a disability and whether reasonable adjustments have been made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010
- Evaluate safeguarding factors and consult the Designated Safeguarding Lead where appropriate
- Review behaviour support plans, risk assessments and records of prior interventions
- Consider whether further support, multi-agency involvement, timetable adjustments or therapeutic strategies could mitigate risk
- Explore alternatives such as a managed move, where appropriate

The rationale for the decision will be clearly documented.

Parents/carers and commissioning bodies will be informed without delay, in writing, and provided with details of the reasons for the exclusion and their right to make representations.

9. Safeguarding

Behaviour incidents may indicate underlying safeguarding concerns, unmet need or risk of harm. Where this is suspected, the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) will be informed without delay and safeguarding procedures will be followed in accordance with *Keeping Children Safe in Education* (current edition).

Leaders will consider whether behaviour may be linked to abuse, neglect, exploitation, contextual safeguarding risks, mental health needs or other vulnerabilities. Where appropriate, early help, multi-agency working or statutory referrals will be initiated.

Suspension or permanent exclusion will never replace or delay appropriate safeguarding intervention. Behavioural responses will not be used in isolation where a safeguarding response is required, and the welfare of the child will remain paramount at all times.

10. Equality and SEND

Reasonable adjustments will be made in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 to ensure that pupils with disabilities or additional needs are not placed at a substantial disadvantage. This includes adapting behaviour expectations, communication approaches, environmental factors, timetables or support strategies where appropriate.

Before imposing serious sanctions, including suspension or permanent exclusion, leaders will consider whether the behaviour may be directly linked to a disability and whether further reasonable adjustments could prevent recurrence.

Leaders systematically monitor behaviour and suspension data to identify patterns, trends or disproportionality. This includes analysis by SEND status, looked-after status, safeguarding vulnerability and other protected characteristics. Where disproportionate impact is identified, leaders will review practice, implement corrective action and adjust support strategies to ensure fairness, equity and compliance with statutory duties.

11. Monitoring and Review

Leaders analyse behaviour, suspension and incident data at least termly to ensure fairness, consistency and a continued reduction in repeat suspensions across The Woodland, The Wilderness and The Wild Meadow. This analysis includes review by pupil group (including SEND, looked-after children and other vulnerable cohorts), type of incident, duration of suspension and impact on attendance and outcomes.

Findings from this analysis inform staff training, early intervention strategies, risk assessment reviews and targeted support plans. Where patterns or disproportionality are identified, leaders take prompt corrective action to ensure compliance with statutory duties and the consistent application of this policy.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if there are changes to statutory guidance issued by the Department for Education or other relevant legislation. Revisions will reflect updated legal requirements, best practice and the evolving needs of the provision.

