

This is a summary of the main changes in the July 2026 statutory guidance on suspension and permanent exclusion, compared to the previous version, with direct links to relevant paragraph numbers for reference:

1. Legislative Updates and Clarifications

1. **Reflecting new regulations:** The guidance now incorporates the Education (Educational Provision for Improving Behaviour) (Application to Academies and Pupil Referral Units and Minor Amendments) Regulations 2026, extending off-site direction powers to pupil referral units and clarifying procedures for all settings (Part two, para 2).
2. **Clarity on exclusion framework and safeguarding:** There is further clarification on the exclusion process, especially regarding keeping pupils apart for safeguarding purposes (Part two, para 2; paras 26–29).
3. **Statutory review process:** Minor clarifications have been made to the statutory review process to support consistency between governing boards, Independent Review Panels (IRPs), and parents (Part two, para 2).

2. Technical and Historical Updates

1. **Technical update for attendance regulations:** The 2024 technical update reflected changes in the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024 (Part two, para 2).
2. **Historical changes retained:** Previous changes from 2023 and 2022 are maintained, such as the ability for headteachers to cancel exclusions before a governing board meeting (Guidance history; para 13), and the introduction of remote access for governing board and IRP meetings (Guidance history; Part Eleven, para 261+).

3. Off-site Direction and Managed Moves

1. **Expanded off-site direction powers:** From 26 July 2026, management committees of pupil referral units can make off-site directions, following the same procedures as maintained schools and academies (para 43).
2. **Procedural requirements for off-site direction:** The guidance details notification, review, and monitoring requirements for off-site direction, including written notice to parents and local authorities, and regular review meetings (paras 44–54).
3. **Clarification on managed moves:** The guidance clarifies that managed moves must be voluntary, agreed by all parties, and cannot be used as a trial or as a condition for avoiding exclusion (paras 58–68).

4. Safeguarding and Equality

1. **Safeguarding separation:** New guidance on temporarily forbidding a pupil from attending school premises for safeguarding reasons, with clear notification and review requirements (paras 26–29).
2. **Equality and SEND:** Reinforced duties under the Equality Act 2010 and Children and Families Act 2014, including reasonable adjustments and best endeavours for pupils with SEND (Summary, para 70–74).

5. Notification and Communication

1. **Notification duties:** Strengthened requirements for prompt notification to parents, social workers, Virtual School Heads, governing boards, and local authorities for all exclusions, regardless of length (paras 82–104).
2. **Remote access meetings:** Expanded and clarified rights and procedures for remote access meetings for governing board and IRP hearings (Part Eleven, paras 261–273).

6. Reintegration and Support

1. **Reintegration strategies:** More detailed expectations for reintegration planning and support for pupils returning from suspension, off-site direction, or safeguarding separation (paras 30–34).

7. Data, Monitoring, and Off-rolling

1. **Data review:** Governing boards are expected to routinely review data on exclusions, off-rolling, and pupil movement to ensure fair and lawful practice (paras 127–130).
2. **Off-rolling:** Clearer definitions and examples of unlawful exclusions and off-rolling, with reference to Ofsted's scrutiny (paras 18–23).

8. Financial Adjustments

1. **Financial readjustment:** Clarified process for financial adjustments following IRP decisions, including a £4,000 payment if a governing board does not reinstate a pupil after a panel direction (paras 233, 250, 276–290)

Revised DfE Exclusion Codes from 1st Sept 2026

CODE:	REASON:
LG	Abuse against sexual orientation and gender identity including bullying
DS	Abuse relating to disability including bullying
AR	Alcohol Related
BU	Bullying
TB	Cyber-bullying or threatening behaviour online
DM	Damage to property
DR	Drug related
BW	Found to have brought a weapon or prohibited item into school
SB	Harmful sexual behaviour
MT	Inappropriate use of social media or online technology
AB	Misandry Behaviour (intense dislike, contempt, or ingrained prejudice against boys and men)
OS	Misbehaviour outside of school
MB	Misogynistic behaviour (hatred, contempt, or deep-seated prejudice against women and girls)
CB	Persistent disruptive behaviour – challenging behaviour
LD	Persistent disruptive behaviour - low level disruption
PA	Physical assault against an adult
PP	Physical assault against a pupil
RA	Racist abuse including bullying
SM	Sexual misconduct
SR	Smoking Related
TH	Theft
MP	Use of Mobile Phone
OW	Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item
VR	Vape Related
VA	Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against an adult
VP	Verbal abuse / threatening behaviour against a pupil
PH	Wilful and repeated transgression of protective measures in place to protect public health