

Managed Moves and Off-site Direction Guidance

September 2026

Updated against DfE statutory guidance: Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement, July 2026.

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1. Purpose and scope

This guidance supports Warwickshire schools and settings when considering managed moves and off-site direction for children of compulsory school age. It should be used alongside the school's behaviour policy, safeguarding procedures, attendance duties, SEND duties and relevant statutory guidance.

The purpose is to ensure that any pupil movement is lawful, transparent, in the pupil's best interests, and used as a planned intervention rather than as an informal or unlawful exclusion.

2. Legislation and statutory guidance

Current DfE statutory guidance recognises school exclusions, managed moves and off-site direction as behaviour management tools that can be used to establish high standards of behaviour and maintain safe school communities. It also confirms that the guidance includes behavioural strategies such as directing pupils off-site to improve behaviour and managed moves to help prevent suspension or permanent exclusion.

3. Key principles for pupil movement

- The needs and best interests of the young person should be paramount.
- The pupil should be supported to share their views and should be kept informed about how those views have been considered when off-site direction or a managed move is being considered.
- Off-site direction is temporary and must be used to improve future behaviour, not as a sanction or punishment for past misconduct.
- A managed move is intended to lead to a permanent transfer to another mainstream school and must be voluntary and agreed by all parties, including parents and the admission authority of the new school.
- A pupil must not be pressured into a managed move, and the threat of exclusion must never be used to influence parents to remove their child from school.
- A pupil must not be permanently excluded because a parent or pupil refuses to agree to a managed move.
- All pupil movement should be supported by clear objectives, robust information sharing, safeguarding consideration, SEND consideration and written review records.

4. Off-site direction

Off-site direction is when a pupil is required to attend another education setting temporarily to improve their behaviour. It can include a time-limited placement in alternative provision or another mainstream school where interventions or targeted support have not been successful, or are deemed inappropriate.

Off-site direction must be planned as an intervention. Any use of alternative provision should be based on an understanding of the support the child or young person needs to improve their behaviour, as well as any SEND or health needs.

4.1 When off-site direction may be appropriate

- Where in-school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate.
- Where a temporary placement away from the home school is needed to improve future behaviour.
- Where the intervention has clear objectives, a proposed timeframe and a reintegration plan.

- Where the pupil will continue to receive a broad and balanced education.

4.2 Planning and written notice

Before an off-site direction begins, the governing board must ensure that parents, and the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan, are notified in writing as soon as practicable after the direction has been made and no later than two school days before the relevant day.

The written notice must include:

- the address where the educational provision will be provided;
- the person to whom the pupil should report on first attending;
- the number of days for which the requirement is imposed;
- the reasons for and objectives of the placement;
- the times of the morning and afternoon sessions, including break times, or the start and end time for a single session day.

4.3 Attendance coding and registration

During an off-site direction to another school, the pupil must be recorded in the attendance register using Code D. This code indicates that the pupil is absent with leave to attend the other school at which they are registered.

4.4 Review requirements

Parents, and the local authority where the pupil has an EHC plan, can request in writing that the governing body holds a review meeting. The governing body must comply with the request as soon as reasonably practicable unless there has already been a review meeting in the previous 10 weeks.

The governing board must keep the placement and reintegration plan under review while the requirement remains in effect. Review meetings should be held at intervals the governing board considers appropriate, having regard to the pupil's needs. Written invitations to attend a review meeting, or to submit written views before the meeting, must be sent not later than six days before the review meeting.

Following each review meeting, the governing board must decide whether the requirement should continue, and if so for what period. The parent must be notified in writing of the decision, including reasons, no later than six days after the review meeting.

Review meetings should include arrangements for future reviews, including how often the placement will be reviewed, when the next review will be and who should be involved. Reviews should be recorded in writing and be frequent enough to provide assurance that the off-site direction is achieving its objectives.

4.5 Information sharing before off-site direction

The referring school and new school should ensure that all relevant information is shared in advance of the off-site direction. This should include prior and current attainment, academic potential, a current risk assessment, advice on effective ongoing risk management and other pupil support strategies.

Prior to any off-site direction, the original school should be able to evidence that appropriate intervention has been carried out, including multi-agency support or statutory assessments where relevant.

4.6 Academy and AP academy arrangements from 26 July 2026

Where an off-site direction or relevant placement was imposed by an academy school or AP academy before 26 July 2026 and continues on or after that date, the academy trust must provide the required written notice as soon

as practicable on or after 26 July 2026 and no fewer than six days before the first review meeting. The first review meeting must be held as soon as reasonably practicable after 1 August 2026.

5. Managed moves

A managed move is a voluntary agreement between schools, parents and a pupil that initiates a process leading to the pupil transferring permanently to another mainstream school. Managed moves should be offered as part of a planned intervention and should only occur when they are in the pupil's best interests.

The move requires the agreement of the parent, the headteacher of the original school, the headteacher of the receiving school and the admission authority of the new school.

5.1 Managed move principles

- A managed move is not a temporary trial admission. The law does not allow for a trial admission or trial managed move.
- If a temporary move is needed to improve behaviour, off-site direction should be used instead.
- Where a managed move follows off-site direction, the pupil will already have been registered at the school where they are receiving education off-site. The deletion from the original school's register only takes place when the move becomes permanent.
- The pupil should be registered at one school only once the managed move becomes permanent.
- Multiple managed moves are unlikely to address behaviour issues and should be avoided unless there is a clear rationale that it is in the pupil's best interests.

5.2 Criteria for managed moves

A managed move should be offered as part of a planned intervention and may be suitable where:

- a pupil is at risk of permanent exclusion and a fresh start in a new mainstream school may be of benefit;
- parents are in full agreement and supportive of the process;
- the pupil is willing to transfer to and attend the new school;
- the original school can evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been carried out, including multi-agency support or statutory assessments where relevant;
- all relevant information has been shared in advance to safeguard the pupil and support a successful transition.

A managed move would not normally be appropriate where the parent is seeking a straightforward transfer, where the child is not on a school roll, where it would not be in the child's best interests, or where the proposal is being used as a substitute for appropriate SEND, safeguarding, attendance or behaviour support.

5.3 Managed move process

- The headteacher of the original school should ensure that all reasonable steps have been taken to support the child's needs in school, including involvement of external support agencies where appropriate and discussion with the EET Coordinator for the LA.
- The original school must seek the views of the parents and pupil and consider whether a managed move is appropriate and in the pupil's best interests.
- If parents are in agreement, the original school should contact the receiving school and admission authority to request a managed move.

- A planning meeting should be arranged with the original school, receiving school, parents, pupil and relevant professionals.
- The meeting should agree support arrangements, SMART targets, approach to behaviour incidents, transport arrangements where relevant, review arrangements and the point at which the move will become permanent.
- All agreed arrangements should be recorded in a written managed move agreement and signed by all relevant parties.
- The original school must inform WCC using the Managed Move Notification Form and send the required paperwork to educationentitlement@warwickshire.gov.uk.

6. Fair Access Protocol and admissions

Managed moves are considered separately from the Fair Access Protocol. Where helpful, discussions about children to be placed via FAP may be combined with discussions about potential managed moves for children who are not eligible for FAP. However, only prescribed categories of children can be placed via FAP. Children who are not eligible for FAP can only be allocated a place in accordance with the school's published admission arrangements.

Where an in-year application is made, including where it is part of a managed move, the admission authority must allocate a place in accordance with its oversubscription criteria. A pupil undergoing a managed move must not be admitted ahead of pupils on a waiting list unless they meet the school's published oversubscription criteria more closely than those already on the list.

7. Information sharing, safeguarding and SEND

Information sharing is vital in both off-site direction and managed moves. The school arranging the placement should share relevant pupil information with the receiving school, provider and the local authority where appropriate. This should include safeguarding information, SEND information, attainment, attendance, behaviour history, current support, risk assessment and effective support strategies.

If a pupil has SEN or a disability, duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014 continue to apply when the pupil is moved off-site or transferred through a managed move.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan and a managed move is being contemplated, the original school should contact the local authority before the managed move. If the local authority, both schools and parents agree that there should be a managed move, the local authority will need to follow the statutory procedures for amending the EHC plan.

Where a pupil has a social worker, including if they have a Child in Need Plan or Child Protection Plan, the social worker, DSL and parents should be involved as early as possible where the pupil is at risk of suspension or permanent exclusion. If a managed move is being contemplated, the social worker should be notified as soon as the original school is contemplating the move and before it takes place, unless this would create safeguarding risks.

For looked-after children, the relevant Virtual School Head should be notified of a proposed managed move. If the managed move is agreed as being in the pupil's best interests, the original and new school should ensure the PEP is reviewed and amended to reflect the move.

8. Registration, attendance and pupil records

During off-site direction to another school, the pupil must be recorded using attendance Code D.

A pupil undergoing a managed move should not be deleted from the original school's admission register until the move becomes permanent. When the managed move becomes permanent, the pupil's name should be deleted from the original school's admission register and added to the admission register of the new school. The pupil should be registered at one school only.

Any move from one school to another must comply with the statutory School Admissions Code, unless the pupil has an EHC plan, and the School Attendance (Pupil Registration) (England) Regulations 2024.

Where a pupil leaves a school, including through an in-year transfer, safeguarding and child protection information should be securely transferred to the new school separately from the main pupil file and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

9. Review, monitoring and governance

Schools and governing boards should routinely review pupil movement data, including permanent exclusions, removals from the admission register, off-site direction and other forms of pupil movement. This should be used to identify patterns, challenge practice and ensure that actions are taken only where necessary and in the pupil's best interests.

Governing boards should consider the school register and absence codes, repeat suspensions, interventions in place for pupils at risk of exclusion, timing of moves, protected characteristics and whether off-site placements are reviewed at sufficient intervals to assure that the education is achieving its objectives and pupils are benefiting from it.

The Education Entitlement Team will monitor managed move notifications and may use Area Inclusion Partnership Meetings to support oversight of managed moves and wider pupil movement where appropriate.

10. Funding and transport

The receiving school may wish to negotiate the transfer of funding if the pupil is formally admitted. The appropriate amount would be the balance remaining of the AWPU plus any other amounts such as Special Educational Needs/EHCP funding, according to the agreed current formulae. Schools may want to negotiate the backdating of funds to the beginning of any preceding off-site direction period where this is locally agreed and appropriate.

Where there is space on a transport route, the pupil may have LA funded transport. Where there is not already space, funding will not normally be provided for transport to the new school setting.

11. Local Authority and school responsibilities

11.1 Local Authority responsibilities

- Provide best practice advice to schools and support liaison with relevant agencies.
- Maintain central information on managed moves notified to WCC.

- Where a pupil has an EHC plan, follow the relevant statutory procedures before any managed move is confirmed.
- Support oversight of pupil movement, including through local inclusion arrangements where appropriate.

11.2 School responsibilities

- Ensure any off-site direction or managed move is in the pupil's best interests and is not used as an informal exclusion or off-rolling mechanism.
- Evidence appropriate initial intervention, including multi-agency support or statutory assessments where relevant, before using off-site direction or managed moves.
- Ensure parents and pupils are supported to share their views and understand how those views have been considered.
- Ensure written notices, plans, reviews and records are completed and retained.
- Share safeguarding, SEND, attainment, attendance, behaviour, risk assessment and support information securely and promptly.
- Inform the Local Authority when a child is removed from or added to the school register.

12. Forms and notification to WCC

Schools must inform WCC of agreed off-site directions and managed moves using the Notification Forms links below:

[Off Site Direction Notification - Online Form](#)

[Managed Move Notification - Online Form](#)

Where the process begins as an off-site direction and later becomes a managed move, schools should ensure that the off-site direction review record clearly evidences why a permanent managed move is now in the pupil's best interests and that parental agreement and admission authority agreement have been secured.

Local Authority contact for managed moves and related queries: educationentitlement@warwickshire.co.uk