

Managed Move guidance for Schools and Academies

**September 2025**

# Purpose of the guidance

This guidance is to assist schools in ensuring they comply with statutory obligations about managed moves.

# Legislation

Current Government guidance [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66be0d92c32366481ca4918a/Suspensions_and_permanent_exclusions_guidance.pdf) from August 2024 advises school leaders that:

A managed move is used to initiate a process which leads to the transfer of a pupil to another mainstream school permanently. Managed moves should be voluntary and agreed with all parties involved, including the parents and the admission authority of the new school. If a temporary move needs to occur to improve a pupil’s behaviour, then offsite direction should be used (More information on direction off site can be found later in this guidance).

Managed moves should only occur when it is in the pupil’s best interests.

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the relevant statutory duties on the new school and local authority will apply. If the current school is contemplating a managed move, it should contact the authority prior to the managed move. If the local authority, both schools and parents are in agreement that there should be a managed move, the local authority will need to follow the statutory procedures for amending a plan

Managed moves should be offered as part of a planned intervention. The original school should be able to evidence that appropriate initial intervention has been carried out, including, where relevant, multi-agency support, or any statutory assessments were done or explored prior to a managed move.

The managed move should be preceded by information sharing between the original school and the new school, including data on prior and current attainment, academic potential, a risk assessment and advice on effective risk management strategies. This includes both schools working with all professionals currently supporting the pupil/ family. It is also important for the new school to ensure that the pupil is provided with an effective integration strategy.

If a parent believes that they are being pressured into a managed move or is unhappy with a managed move, they can take up the issue through the school’s formal complaints procedure with the governing board and, where appropriate, the local authority. Within the school inspections framework, under leadership and management, Ofsted will consider any evidence found of a parent being pressured into a managed move that has resulted in off-rolling and is likely to judge a school as inadequate on the basis of such evidence.

# Key points

**The following principles should underpin all requests for Managed Moves:**

* A Managed Move is never an early or first response due to a child’s challenging behaviour. Managed Moves should be considered as part of a measured response to supporting the child’s emotional, social and behavioural needs. It is likely to be a strategy considered as part of the graduated approach of support.
  + A Managed Move request should be initiated by the child’s current (home) school.
  + It is essential that the full agreement of parents/carers is obtained. The views of the pupil to undertake a transfer to another school voluntarily must also be considered.
  + All schools must act in a spirit of partnership and collaboration for the Managed Move arrangements to work.
  + The managed move should be preceded by information sharing between the original school and the new school, including data on prior and current attainment, academic potential, a risk assessment and advice on effective risk management strategies.
  + The school and family need to share the view that the receiving school is likely to be able to offer something sufficiently different to make the Managed Move viable. This may include the size/location of the new school or a new peer group/teaching team/curriculum, depending on the needs of the child
  + Within Doncaster, there has been a local agreement that the pupil will remain on roll at their original school until the end of the managed move and will only be taken off roll if the managed move is successful and the pupil moves onto the new school roll.
  + If school leaders wish to make their own agreements about when a pupil changes school roll it is advised that an arrangement is set out prior to the move commencing about what should happen in the event that the managed move fails.
  + A managed move should last for no longer than 12 weeks.

Any extension past 12 weeks is not advised by Doncaster local authority. If the receiving school believes that the child can be successful, then they should place the pupil permanently on roll.

School leaders can agree an extension if all parties (including the family) agree and there is a clear rationale for extension.

* + Regular review and progress reports mustbe undertaken (recommended review cycle is 4 weekly during the managed move)
* It is the expectation of the Local Authority that a Managed Move should be considered prior to a permanent exclusion being implemented (unless there is a serious breach of a school behaviour policy). The home school should be able to demonstrate that all other preventative strategies have been exhausted.
* A managed move can be used to support a child who has an EHCP (see further information below).
  + A managed move should be a last resort for a Looked After Child and take place only with the agreement and support of the Local Authority Virtual School
  + A Managed Move would NOT normally be appropriate if:
* A parent is seeking a straightforward transfer to another school
* The child is not on a school roll
* The child would be unable to return to the home school if the placement is unsuccessful
* It would not ultimately be of benefit to the child
* School leaders should differentiate between managed moves, off-site direction or any other arrangements for a pupil to attend another school. If considering off site direction for an extended period of time and it is successful a managed move should be considered to make the move permanent.

# Pupils who have an EHCP

Where a pupil has an EHC plan, the relevant statutory duties on the new school and local authority will apply. If the current school is contemplating a managed move, it should contact the local authority SEN team prior to the managed move.

If the SEN team, both schools and parents are in agreement that there should be a managed move, the local authority will need to follow the statutory procedures for amending a plan.

The processes for amending an EHC plan are set out in Special educational needs and disability code of practice: 0 to 25 years

1. **Tiered system for Managed Moves**

Doncaster Local Authority operates a tier system for recording managed moves.

Every Managed Move agreement should fit into one of the following tiers. The tier will determine the level of LA involvement and allocation of IYFAP credit.

# Tier 1

Purpose: New opportunity due to challenging circumstances (perceived bullying issue, school refusal concerns)

Duration: Up to 12 weeks

Ending: Pupil moves onto new school roll

IYFAP Credit: No credit allocated if taken on roll

LA involvement: Case officer involvement in the following circumstances;

* The pupil has previously failed a managed move.
* The pupil has received more than 15 days fixed term suspension.
* The pupil has previously received support via inclusion panel.
* The pupil has been previously permanently excluded.
* The pupil has had significant periods of offsite direction.
* There are significant barriers with engaging the family.

Allocated case officer to attend admission meeting and any subsequent reviews. Case officer can also offer support with brokering the managed move and gaining agreement from family.

If schools are unsure about whether a tier 1 managed move is appropriate, they can contact [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk) for advice.

Please note: the failure of a tier 1 managed move does not prevent a pupil being allocated to the school that the managed move was unsuccessful at in the future.

# Tier 2

Purpose: Immediate prevention of Permanent Exclusion. Only applicable for cases reported to the LA as PEX that also meet the DfE criteria for PEX.

Duration: Up to 12 weeks

Ending: Pupils moves onto new school roll

IYFAP Credit: Credit allocated if taken on roll and if LA case officer is involved throughout the move.

LA involvement: Allocated case officer to facilitate and attend admission meeting and any subsequent reviews. Case officer can also offer support with brokering the managed move and gaining agreement from family.

1. **The role of the local authority**

The local authority offer around managed moves has been extended this academic year to include case officer support for tier 1 managed moves in certain circumstances, in addition to supporting all tier 2 managed moves. The circumstances in which a case officer can support a tier 1 managed move are listed above.

In addition to individual case support local authority case officers can offer advice and guidance around suitability, expectations, and ongoing interventions in managed move cases prior to set up**.**

Any queries or requests for advice and guidance should be sent to [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk)

All managed moves should be reported to the local authority, by submitting completed managed move contract to [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk), regardless of whether there is case officer involvement. This is to allow for data collection and planning of services to support schools and pupils.

# Managed Move Procedure

1. Prior to requesting a Managed Move, the Head Teacher should be satisfied that all reasonable steps have been taken to resolve the pupil’s difficulties in school. This should include the involvement of relevant support services.
2. The current school must consult with the parents and child about their views on a move to another school at a review meeting as part of the pupils current support plan. The school should invite any other relevant professionals.

# Schools must not suggest to parents that they remove the child and find another school. All such cases, whereby parents/carers agree given this as a suggested option, will be formally investigated by the Local Authority.

1. When parents have agreed, and a receiving school has been identified information should be shared with the receiving school. The LA has produced an information exchange template for guidance on what information should be shared.
2. An admission meeting should be arranged as soon as possible (good practice would be within 2 weeks). Representatives from both schools, parents, the pupil and the LA caseworker (where appropriate) should attend this meeting. If the child refuses to engage at this stage then he/she will remain at the original school.
3. A managed move contract should be completed at the admission meeting and shared with parents and schools. The LA has produced a template managed move contract that schools are requested to use.
4. The managed move contract should be sent to the LA for monitoring purposes. All completed contracts should be sent to [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk).
5. The receiving school must admit the pupil in accordance with the principles outlined in the child’s support plan. This might, for example include pastoral support for the duration of the Managed Move period.
6. Every school is expected to maintain a stock of school uniform for children who are undertaking a managed move so parents are not expected to buy uniform during the managed move period.
7. Where a part-time timetable is employed, appropriate attendance codes should be used and the part-time timetable should be reported to the Local Authority as per the Part Time Timetable Guidance.
8. The placement should be reviewed every 4 weeks and the child, parents, both schools, professionals supporting the family and the LA Case Officer should be invited to attend the review meetings. A review template has been produced by the LA that schools are invited to use.
9. During the Managed Move the receiving school should provide the home school with a weekly record of the child’s attendance (how this is communicated should be agreed in the Managed Move admission meeting and recorded on the contract).
10. A member of the receiving school staff team should meet the child regularly to review their progress towards the Managed Move targets. This allows the child the chance to identify what has gone well and how to replicate success.
11. End of Managed Move Period

* At the final review meeting, a decision must be made as to whether the pupil transfers permanently to the receiving school or returns to the original school. The decision must be reasonable and in line with original targets set for the student at the outset of the Managed Move period and any subsequent review meetings held during the move.
* The outcome of the move should be communicated with the LA by sending completed contracts to [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk)
* If an IYFAP credit is on offer the LA case officer will contact school admission to request that the IYFAP credit is allocated.
* On the agreed date, the pupils name must be deleted from the register of the original school and shown as single registered on the admission register of the receiving school.

# Ending a move early

In exceptional circumstances (usually due to significant behavioural challenges) the receiving school may wish to terminate the arrangement before the Managed Move is completed. If so, the receiving school’s head teacher should consult with the original head teacher before confirming this decision in writing to parents, specifying the date from which the pupil must return to the original school. The LA should be informed that the managed move has ended.

# Views of the child

While it is expected that the child should attend some, if not all of the Managed Move meetings and reviews and be encouraged to express their view freely and honestly, it may be difficult for them to do this. An adult who has a good rapport with the child should find of their views about the current and proposed situations.

# Views of the parent

Parents should be invited and encouraged to attend admission and review meetings of the managed moves so they can share their views and wishes about their child’s education. Parental agreement to a managed move is required.

# Funding

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 SEN funding or pupil premium. Schools may wish to negotiate the backdating of funds to the beginning of the trial period. It would be appropriate for schools to discuss funding arrangements prior to the commencement of the Managed Move.

# Transport

Transport arrangements (if required) must be considered at the planning meeting. The cost of any transport will be met by the parent(s) or by the home school.

# Reporting to the LA

Completed Managed Moves contracts, reviews and outcomes should be sent to [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk)

If you require further advice on the use of Managed Moves or wish to request case officer support please contact the Engagement & Behaviour Team at [managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk](mailto:managedmoves@doncaster.gov.uk) or on 01302 734210.

1. **Off-Site Direction**

[Suspension and Permanent Exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/66be0d92c32366481ca4918a/Suspensions_and_permanent_exclusions_guidance.pdf) from August 2024 outlines that if a temporary move needs to occur to improve a pupil’s behaviour, then offsite direction should be used.

The guidance also states that:

Off-site direction is when a governing board of a maintained school requires a pupil to attend another education setting to improve their behaviour. Whilst the legislation does not apply to academies, they can arrange off-site provision for such purposes under their general powers.

Off-site direction should only be used where in school interventions and/or outreach have been unsuccessful or are deemed inappropriate and should only be used to arrange a temporary stay in AP.

Off-site direction may only be used as a way to improve future behaviour and not as a sanction or punishment for past misconduct.

During the off-site direction to another school, pupils must be dual registered.

Depending on the individual needs and circumstances of the pupil, off-site direction into alternative provision can be full-time or a combination of part-time support in alternative provision and continued mainstream education.

A proposed maximum period of time should be discussed and agreed upon as part of the planning phase for an off-site direction. As part of planning, alternative options should be considered once the time limit has been reached, including a managed move on a permanent basis (if a pupil is placed in a mainstream school) upon review of the time limited placement.

The length of time a pupil spends in another mainstream school or alternative provision and the reintegration plan must be kept under review by the governing body, who must hold review meetings at such intervals as they, having regard to the needs of the pupil, consider appropriate, for as long as the requirement remains in effect.

The governing body must ensure, insofar as is practicable, that any review meeting is convened on a date, and at a time, that is suitable for the parent.

The governing body must keep the placement under review for as long as the requirement remains in effect and must decide following each review meeting as to whether the requirement should continue to have effect and, if so, for what period of time. The meeting should include arrangements for reviews, including how often the placement will be reviewed, when the next review will be and who should be involved in the reviews.

To support a pupil with reintegration into their referring school, the focus of intervention whilst off-site should remain on ensuring that a pupil continues to receive a broad and balanced curriculum whilst any inappropriate behaviours which require intervention are being addressed.

If a pupil with a disability or SEN has been moved offsite, the duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Children and Families Act 2014 continue to apply (for example, to make reasonable adjustments or to put support in place to meet SEN).

The length of time a pupil spends in another mainstream school or alternative provision will depend on what best supports the pupil’s needs and potential improvement in behaviour.

Headteachers should give consideration to transport arrangements for the pupil when arranging an off-site direction to ensure that the placement is accessible for the pupil.

**If schools have any questions regarding off site direction they can contact** [**Off-siteDirection@doncaster.gov.uk**](mailto:Off-siteDirection@doncaster.gov.uk)