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# Trauma Informed Relationships and Behaviour Policy

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This policy and its accompanying practice papers reflect a range of national guidance and practical experience in respect of the management of behaviour.

Documents consulted include:

**This Behaviour Policy has been written with reference to:**

**Keeping pupils safe in education statutory guidance** [Department for Education](#)  
September 2024

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/behaviour-and-discipline-in-schools>

**Use of reasonable force in schools**

**The Pupils Act 1989 and subsequent Guidance and Statutory Instruments of the Act**

**Behaviour in schools Advice for Head teachers and school staff September 2022**

**The Human Rights Act 1998**

**OFSTED Summary report - 'Managing Challenging Behaviour'**

## **Review**

This document will be reviewed annually.

## **Introduction**

For some of our pupils attending school can be immensely daunting.

Many of our pupils have had prior educational experiences which have led them to have negative views of school, learning and often themselves.

Many of our pupils have also had life experiences that have led to trauma. Such experiences can impact upon their ability to communicate and express their needs, and feelings like sadness, anger, hurt and confusion. It is likely, that at times behaviours that professionals find challenging will be presented. Often this presentation is the way pupils express their sense of confusion, frustration, anger, anxiety, loss and hurt.

Our pupils need trusted, compassionate and understanding adults who can look beyond the signals of distress and seek to understand the reasons behind it and offer safety, guidance and an environment that positively supports recovery and change. Our pupils really need those around them to understand that behaviours they may find challenging, are communications of distress, and to have empathy and understanding for the feelings being expressed, rather than responding primarily with discipline. In all we do to support those that care for our pupils we want to support them to 'connect before they correct'.

Staff are encouraged to adopt a considered approach in order to meet the needs of individuals. Our fundamental belief is that **every pupil** has the potential for growth, has positive qualities and has the right to be treated with respect and dignity.

It is important to note that we all understand that Behaviour is a form of communication. Describing behaviour as good or poor positive or negative can suggest that this is not understood and invite responses from adults that is both ethically wrong and ineffective as a means of behaviour change. However, there is merit in establishing a common understanding around behaviour which is described as normative or usually socially acceptable in the world beyond school. For ease of reference, we often describe this as socially constructive or acceptable behaviour.

This policy is designed to promote a positive ethos of socially constructive behaviour in which pupils can work and play well together with other people. There is an expectation of behaviour in all aspects of the school day which places the needs of the pupil at its centre. We maintain the belief that pupils' behaviour should be understood and pupils can be supported to develop more socially constructive behaviours in order to enable them to access learning and avoid the disruption to learning of others.

## **Aims & Objectives**

Our school aims to provide a caring, calm and secure environment in which tolerance, understanding and respect for others is fostered. We aim to promote a positive culture and to encourage in all pupils a sense of responsibility to themselves, to our school and to the wider community. This is achieved through governors, staff, pupils, parents/carers and working in partnership.

**We aim to:**

- Encourage a calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere conducive to learning, developing skills and knowledge.
- Foster positive attitudes in our pupils towards themselves and others which recognises and values achievements at all levels.
- Enable pupils to recognise and appreciate socially constructive behaviour.
- Encourage increasing independence and self-discipline so each pupil learns to accept responsibility for the impact of their behaviour and those choices they do consciously make.
- Provide a consistent approach to behaviour management across the school so that pupils feel safe and secure in their school environment.
- Make boundaries of acceptable behaviour clear and understand the relationship between actions and consequences.
- Ensure all pupils feel safe in our school.
- Provide an interesting, well-planned curriculum that motivates pupils to learn alongside developing the social, emotional and communication skills.
- Implement mental health and trauma-informed approach to communication in our school.

**This Behaviour and Relationships Policy seeks to inform, guide and support staff, parents/carers, and pupils to achieve these aims through actively promoting positive behaviour by reflecting on ten key aspects of school practice.**

**Our school is invested in supporting the very best possible relational health between;**

Parent/ carer and pupil

Pupil and pupil

Pupil and school staff

Parent and school staff

School staff

School staff and senior leaders

School staff and external agencies.

To this end our school is committed to educational practices which Protect, Connect, Communicate, Relate, Learn and Grow.

**Protect**

Increased 'safety cues' in all aspects of the school day; from 'meet and greet' at the start of the day through to the positive endings of each school day.

Develop the relationships with families to ensure clear communication around times when additional support may be needed - an open-door policy for informal discussions with parents/ carers.

Staff trained in 'PRICE Principles' and in In Trauma Informed Practice

Staff ensure that interactions with pupils are socially engaging and not socially defensive, to decrease likelihood of pupils relating defensively (flight/fright/freeze).

A whole school commitment to cease all use of harsh voices, shouting, put downs, criticism and shaming (proven to be damaging psychologically and neurologically).

Staff 'interactively repair' occasions when they themselves move into defensiveness.

Learning behaviour – pupils will be supported to develop socially constructive communication

Vulnerable pupils have easy and daily access to at least one named, emotionally available adult, and know when and where to find that adult.

School staff adjust expectations around vulnerable pupils to correspond with their developmental capabilities and experience of traumatic stress. This includes removing vulnerable and traumatised pupils in a kind and non-judgmental way from situations they are

not managing well (e.g. pupils who are continually triggered into alarm states in the main playground can access calmer, smaller areas with emotionally regulating adults).

### **Connect**

Staff will seek to, over time, develop the professional relationships with pupils which will enable them to connect with the pupils. Staff will ensure they remain emotionally regulated throughout all interactions with pupils. The staff will use their skills to coregulate pupils who may be experiencing periods of dysregulation.

Relational interventions specifically designed to bring down stress hormone levels (e.g. from toxic to tolerable) in vulnerable pupils, enabling them to feel calm, soothed and safe. This is to support learning, quality of life and protect against stress-induced physical and mental illness, now and in later life.

Evidence-based interventions that aim to repair psychological damage and brain damage caused by traumatic life experiences, through emotionally regulating, playful, enriched adult-pupil interactions.

The emotional well-being and regulating of staff are treated as a priority to prevent burnt out, stress-related absence, or leaving the profession through stress-related illness, secondary trauma and/or feeling undervalued, blamed or shamed.

### **Communicate**

Staff will communicate using inclusive communication strategies. Our staff will use stance, facial expression, body language and verbal cues to develop communication with pupils. Pupils will have socially constructive communication modelled so they can develop the skills they will need in future independent lives. For some, this will be supporting pupils to verbalise feelings and needs. For others it will be to find ways they can communicate their needs and wishes in other ways.

### **Relate**

A whole-school commitment to enabling pupils to see themselves, their relationships and the world positively, rather than through a lens of threat, danger or self-blame.

Vulnerable pupils provided with repeated relational opportunities (with emotionally available adults) to make the shift from 'blocked trust' (not feeling psychologically safe with anyone) to trust, and from being helpless or trying to be completely self-sufficient to seeking help when they need it.

Pedagogic interventions that help staff to get to know pupils better on an individual basis e.g. 'I wish my teacher knew'. (What matters to them, who matters to them, their dreams, hopes). This is key to enabling pupils to feel safe enough to talk, if they wish, about painful life experiences, which are interfering with their ability to learn and their quality of life.

### **Reflect**

Staff training and development and training in the art of good listening, dialogue, empathy and understanding (instead of asking a series of questions/ giving lectures).

The nurturing of staff in such a way that they feel truly valued and emotionally-regulated and in so doing to support them to interact throughout the school day with positive social engagement rather than defensiveness.

Provision of skills and resources to support staff in meaning empathetic conversations with vulnerable pupils who want to talk about their lives. This is to empower pupils to better manage their school/home situations and life in general.

Provision of a clear, confidential and non-shaming system of self-referral for pupils' help/talk time.

Within the context of an established and trusted relationship with a member of staff (working alliance), pupils are given the means and opportunity to symbolise painful life experiences through images as well as words, as a key part of 'working through' these experiences and memory re-consolidation. Means include the provision of different modes of expression, e.g. art/play/drama/ music/sand/emotion worksheets/emotion cards.

PSHE (Personal, Social and Health Education) RSHE (Relationship, Sexual Health Education) and psycho-education as preventative input, informed by current research psychological and neuroscience) on mental health, mental ill-health (full range of specific conditions), relationships, emotions, social media and tools for how to 'do life well'. Curricular content enables pupils to make informed choices about how they relate to others, how they live their lives, and how they treat their brains, bodies and minds. Staff development and training to help pupils move from 'behaving' their trauma/painful life experiences, to reflecting on those experiences. Staff learn to do this through empathetic conversation, addressing pupils' negative self-referencing and helping them develop positive, coherent narratives about their lives.

### **Consistency & Leadership**

Consistent yet flexible implementation of this policy by all is vital, to consider the varied and complex needs of the pupils who attend our school. The policy should also promote regular attendance, a strong work ethic, self-regulation and respect for others.

#### **To help us achieve our aims we will:**

- provide a clear set of rules, rewards and consequences through consultation with staff, pupils, parents and Governorship/Proprietary members;
- publicise the above so that everyone is clear about what is expected and approaches to behaviour management are consistent across the school;
- ensure that there are consistent nurturing practices across the school;
- ensure a trauma-informed approach is embedded across the school so that the mental health and wellbeing of pupils and staff is a priority;
- ensure that pupils understand the meaning of inappropriate and unsafe behaviour and bullying and know how the school will deal with it.

### **Classroom Management**

We encourage socially constructive behaviour through communication of high expectations, clear policies and an ethos which fosters mutual respect between staff and pupils. Expectations and routines are explicitly taught to the pupils to ensure consistency of approach.

In our school, all pupils are expected to:

- Respect themselves and others
- Listen to and follow instructions
- Be kind, fair and polite
- Ignore distractions
- Be safe

These expectations are clearly displayed in every classroom and around the building in communal spaces. Staff reinforce these displays by drawing attention to them daily as part of their classroom management strategies.

Everyone within our school has the right to feel safe and secure, and all incidents of violence will be dealt with bearing this in mind. Physical and verbal aggression, and bullying is unacceptable and will be challenged and managed. All reported incidents of bullying whether they are observed by staff or reported by a pupil or parent will be dealt with rapidly and from the premise that bullying is unacceptable.

Parents/carers will always be informed if their pupil has been physically aggressive towards other pupils or staff, or if they have been the perpetrator or victim of bullying behaviour (see Anti-Bullying Policy).

### **Effective strategies in addressing and managing behaviour that may be perceived as challenging by professionals:**

- Being confident, consistent and fair in dealing with behaviour that may be perceived as challenging;
- Using eye contact and non-verbal communication signals to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Using verbal reminders to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Exploring sensitively when calm and connected, the pupils understanding if any of the cause of the behaviour;
- Getting alongside and actively re-engaging the pupils in the task;
- Making use primarily connection and co-regulation strategies, and if necessary diversions, a tactical change of activity or humour (when appropriate) to re-engage the pupils;
- Use of play, story boards, role modelling;
- Using direct requests to cease behaviours which are unsafe or likely to lead to negative outcomes;
- Giving a verbal warning that behaviour resulting in the damage or loss of property and equipment will need reparation;
- Ensuring that appropriate interventions are made if dysregulated behaviour continues

### **Positive personal contact between pupils and staff**

Within our community there is clear and unequivocal expression of normal, positive, physical contact between adults and between adults and pupils. This is not physical contact, which in any way seeks to establish authority over a pupil, but that which expresses care and acceptance, to provide comfort; ease distress and signal care as would be expected between trusted staff and young people.

However, the following guiding principles should apply:

- Given that a higher proportion of pupils with special needs may have experienced sexual and/or physical abuse or may lack understanding around supportive contact, staff need to ensure that any physical contact is not misinterpreted
- Staff must be aware of the young people's difficulties around physical contact. This can be especially challenging for a pupil on the Autism Spectrum
- If at any time a pupil demonstrates verbally or otherwise that they are not comfortable with physical contact staff should respond immediately by ceasing that contact. *However, staff must consider Health and Safety issues when deciding to cease physical contact. If cessation is likely to increase the risk of injury to staff, the pupil or others present, these safety considerations must take precedence*

- There should be no expectations of privacy for the physical expression of support or comfort, although this may be appropriate in some circumstances (e.g. bereavement) staff need to be aware that different cultural factors and possible misunderstandings should be considered
- Age and maturity are factors to be considered in deciding appropriate physical contact
- Where a member of staff feels that it would be inappropriate to respond to a pupil seeking physical comfort, the reasons for denying this should be explained. They should be comforted verbally as necessary
- The issue of personal contact in general is raised in interviews and induction training for staff and discussed in staff development.
- Physical contact should never be in response to or be intended to arouse sexual expectations or feelings
- Pupils should be counselled with regard to socially appropriate /inappropriate times/places/situations to seek physical comfort
- Appropriate physical contact should be a focus of discussions with parents/carers
- We normally use a side on hug to prevent any misunderstanding of physical contact.

*We have a contingent touch procedure which is highlighted for individuals whose professional multi agency team have agreed needs a higher level of contingent touch required. When this is appropriate there is a plan written and agreed around how this will look for the individual pupil*

## **Rewards**

We regularly celebrate the success of all pupils in a variety of ways as we recognise that focussing on success and positive outcomes is essential in developing a positive culture and ethos.

We celebrate these successes in many ways including;

- Simple gestures and facial expressions
- Verbal praise/feedback
- Dojo points
- Attendance awards
- Multiple opportunities during the day for a fresh start

## Intrinsic vs extrinsic motivation

Whatever their history, approaches which support pupils to experience their own intrinsic motivation will be more empowering and sustainable. Encouraging intrinsic motivation in a pupil involves creating an environment that fosters autonomy, competence, and a sense of relatedness. Some strategies staff can use:

**Provide Choice:** Offer the pupil choices whenever appropriate. This could range from small decisions like what to have for lunch or the order of task completion, to larger decisions like what extracurricular activities they want to participate in. Having a say in their own life can empower them to make decisions based on their interests and preferences.

**Set Realistic Goals:** Work with the pupil to set goals that are attainable and meaningful to them. Encourage them to choose goals that align with their interests and values. Celebrate their progress and achievements along the way to reinforce their intrinsic motivation.



**Encourage Exploration and Curiosity:** Foster an environment where curiosity is encouraged and exploration is supported. Provide access to resources, educational materials, and opportunities to try new activities. Celebrate their efforts in trying new things rather than just focusing on outcomes.

**Offer Positive Feedback and Encouragement:** Acknowledge the pupil's efforts and progress, focusing on their actions and strategies rather than just outcomes. Use praise that is specific and genuine, highlighting the qualities they displayed in pursuing their goals.

**Model Intrinsic Motivation:** Lead by example by demonstrating your own passion and commitment to personal goals and interests.

**Create a Supportive Environment:** Foster a supportive and nurturing environment where the pupil feels safe to take risks and make mistakes. Offer guidance and support when needed, but also allow them the space to learn from their experiences and develop their own problem-solving skills.

**Encourage Self-Reflection:** Help the pupil develop self-awareness by encouraging them to reflect on their interests, strengths, and areas for growth. Prompt them to think about what motivates them intrinsically and how they can pursue those interests further.

**Avoid Excessive Rewards or Punishments:** Be cautious with external rewards or punishments, as they can undermine intrinsic motivation. Instead, focus on fostering a sense of autonomy and competence by allowing the pupil to take ownership of their actions and decisions.

**Provide Opportunities for Mastery:** Offer activities and challenges that are appropriately challenging for the pupil's skill level. This allows them to experience a sense of competence and mastery, which can enhance intrinsic motivation.

**Build Positive Relationships:** Foster positive relationships built on trust, respect, and empathy. A strong bond between the foster parent and pupil can enhance the pupil's sense of relatedness and intrinsic motivation.

By implementing these strategies, foster parents can help cultivate a sense of intrinsic motivation in the pupils, empowering them to pursue their interests and goals with enthusiasm and passion.

## **Behaviour Strategies and the Teaching of socially constructive communication**

It is recognised that socially constructive communication needs to be modelled and taught. We embed the Trauma Informed Practice trained by Dr Jennifer Nock to support a pupil's social engagement system. The development of positive pupil/staff relationships along with effective teaching which recognises individual needs encourages pupils to behave in socially constructive and less challenging ways.

Staff use a range of strategies which allow pupils to learn how to manage their emotions more effectively without disrupting the learning of others. These strategies may include:

- Time alone in another part of the classroom
- Time out of class with a known adult supporting
- Behaviour Mentor or teaching Assistant intervention
- Use of a resources agreed with the pupil such as calm/sensory box
- Use of time away
- Use of a quiet room

In order to model appropriate behaviour in the playground, teaching and support staff play games and encourage the pupils to play appropriately with their peers. Staff will supervise pupils during lunch and breaks at all times and a rota for this is in place. This establishes strong relationships between pupils and staff, providing secure attachments and key adult figures.

## **PRICE Training**

Polaris runs a mandatory training course called Promoting Positive Approaches to Behaviour incorporating PRICE (Protected Rights in a Caring Environment) which all staff in schools' attend.

## **Primary Prevention**

PRICE considers Primary Prevention as key to reducing the likelihood of what may be perceived as challenging behaviour by professionals occurring in the first instance. This approach takes into account:

- Consistent care and predictable routines;
- Safe predictable school environment;
- Promoting choice and independence.

## **Secondary Prevention**

The aim of secondary prevention is to identify signs of escalating distress and prevent dysregulation building up into a full blown 'crisis'. Secondary Prevention is the action taken by a staff once a combination of setting conditions and a trigger in which the pupil's experiences stress responses which may be associated with their trauma.

It can be useful to simply think about presenting behaviour and divide into three main categories or stages of development. The ABC approach to supporting behaviour is based on the premise that by focussing purely on the behaviour, you are unlikely to alter or reduce its frequency. It is just as important to recognise the causes and effects of a behaviour as it is to address the actual behaviour being presented. The ABCs are:

### **Antecedent**

This refers to the causes and historical and immediate contextual factors of behaviour such as:

- The culture and ethos of the school and classroom;
- Behaviour and attitude of staff members
- Relationship between staff and pupils
- Teaching activities/areas of interest;
- Background and previous experience of pupils;
- Specific medical, psychological and emotional needs of pupils;
- Specific learning needs of the pupil;
- Rights, rules, routines and responsibilities.

Strategies that are effective in addressing and managing contextual issues are reflected in the Secure Base approach by:-

- Making pupils feel welcome by smiling and being pleased to see them;
- Taking time to build positive relationships with pupils, based on mutual respect;
- Setting a positive example through your own attitude, behaviour and manner;
- Taking care and providing security and predictability for pupils;

- Being clear, consistent and taking the role of being a trustworthy adult;
- Noticing when the pupil is doing well and interacting with enthusiasm and confidence;
- Planning and preparing routines/structure that meets the needs of the pupils;
- Ensuring that school can be fun, is stimulating and varied;
- Ensuring that you work at the pace of the pupils, small steps are often the most positive;
- Using a variety of resources and support
- Setting clear expectations and guidance for behaviour in and out of the classroom;
- Taking responsibility for supporting and managing behaviour;
- Being confident, consistent and fair in your approach;
- Giving clear and simple instructions;
- Giving your time;
- Giving praise and recognition;
- Belief, hope and not giving up goes a long way;
- Evaluating your approach and being prepared to change things that didn't work.

### **Behaviour**

This refers to the response of pupil's when the contextual factors have not been successfully addressed. Issues to be considered are:

- The type and level of behaviour presented by pupil's;
- The drivers behind any behaviour presented;
- How the behaviour is addressed by the staff.

### **Effective strategies in addressing and managing behaviour that may be perceived as challenging by professionals:**

- Being confident, consistent and fair in dealing with behaviour that may be perceived as challenging ;
- Using eye contact and non-verbal communication signals to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Using verbal reminders to re-enforce expectations of desired behaviour;
- Exploring sensitively when calm and connected, the pupils understanding if any of the cause of the behaviour;
- Getting alongside and actively re-engaging the pupil in the task;
- Making use primary connection and co-regulation strategies, and if necessary, diversions, a tactical change of activity or humour (when appropriate) to re-engage the pupils;
- Use of play, story boards, role modelling;
- Using direct requests to cease behaviours which are unsafe or likely to lead to negative outcomes.
- Giving a verbal warning that behaviour resulting in the damage or loss of property and equipment will need reparation;
- Ensuring that appropriate interventions and made if dysregulated behaviour continue

### **Consequences**

This refers to any action taken as a result of behaviour perceived as challenging displayed by pupils and relates to the behaviour support and management strategies described above. Pupils should be encouraged and supported to respect the rights of others, understand the value and safety of predictable routines, assisted to make positive choices that increase access to ordinary life experiences. This is about helping pupils to take responsibility for reflecting on their actions, and it is never effective to just be punished for certain behaviour.

In considering the consequences of behaviour, the following should be established:

- Are the consequences consistent with the behaviour displayed?
- Will there be a desired and successful outcome to employing the consequence?
- How will the staff influence the consequences employed?
- Do the consequences address the contextual issues as well as the behaviour perceived as negative being presented?
- Identify personal impacts (emotional or practical);
- What happened to the pupils? Did s/he have the behaviour rewarded or sanctioned?
- Any impact on the family? Home?
- Effects on other pupils?

Consequences across our school may include but are not exclusive to the following list:

- Verbal rule reminders
- Verbal warning given and inappropriate behaviour explained; expectation for improvement given
- A loss of a privilege
- Extra work/repeating work which is unsatisfactory
- Missing a break time or a specific activity
- Internal suspension
- Fixed term suspension

Suspensions are only given with the agreement of the Head teacher and recorded appropriately.

A fixed term exclusion is the decision of the Head teacher following an investigation. Internal suspension and fixed term suspensions are usually consequences of behaviours which have caused significant health and safety risks or have had a significant impact upon the safety and learning of others.

Higher level consequences should always be reinforced by communication with parents/ carers through telephone calls, emails or letters to parents and recorded on our school's system. Suspensions or exclusions will be shared with parent/ carer and any supporting agencies.

The above guidelines are 'examples' of effective strategies and are not meant to be prescriptive.

Implementing strategies that are supportive to emotional and behavioural development needs to be carefully considered so as not to cause misunderstanding and distress to a pupil.

### **Intervention de-escalation techniques**

Despite attempts to create and sustain a positive environment which encourages socially constructive behaviours our pupils can sometimes struggle to maintain socially constructive presentation. Our pupils sometimes cope poorly with frustration, conflict and anxiety resulting in poor judgement, a failure to anticipate the effect or consequences of their behaviour, and on occasions a temporary loss of control.

Staff will know in what situations a pupil's behaviour is likely to struggle. The individual plans detail known triggers and issues which can lead to difficulties.

Inevitably, however, young people can react in a surprising manner due to unseen internal triggers or situations from outside of school which are unknown to staff.

It is important that our staff recognise that they can have their own emotional triggers, life experiences and different thresholds and tolerances. Moreover because of their personal differences a degree of idiosyncrasy is likely to occur. However, the management of pupils should not be dependent upon personal or spontaneous whims. To achieve consistency, it is important that all staff seek to manage the following presentation:

- *dangerous behaviour*
- *scapegoating*
- *gender based prejudice*
- *racial based prejudice/comments*
- *religious intolerance*
- *bullying*
- *loss of self control* which could lead to harm of themselves or others
- *serious damage to property*
- *causing tensions likely to escalate into aggression or distress*
- *spreading gossip likely to cause distress*
- *physical aggression*
- *debilitating anxiety*
- *self-injurious behaviour*

Staff interactions with pupils are crucial to limiting the frequency, duration and intensity of disruptive/challenging behaviours and to promoting socially constructive behaviour in pupils.

It is vital that there are consistent expectations and responses that if some staff responses promote socially constructive behaviours in pupils, then others inadvertently increase the likelihood of socially destructive behaviour, it is important that there is a professional discussion around adaptation of response.

In school we have adopted the PRICE training model for Behaviour support techniques - We have trained staff at the school in PRICE techniques

- See PRICE Training booklets for more detailed de-escalation approaches
- See Appendix 2 Guidance on De escalation

It is always our priority to avoid a pupil getting to the point of crisis behaviours. We use our knowledge of the pupil and situations to try to ensure that they move back to a place where they can manage their own responses more positively without the need for physical support.

### **Dialogue**

In any situation where a pupil's behaviour provokes intervention, dialogue is an essential response. It is only when this needs to be reinforced that other actions should be considered.

Persuasion or Dissuasion is where staff focus the discussions with young people with the aim of persuading them towards or dissuading them from an intended course of action. It is in effect focused guidance.

### **Individual Behaviour Support Plans**

All pupils will have an Individual Risk Assessed Plan completed as soon as is practicable and this is reviewed annually or whenever there is a significant incident. The risk

assessment considers the function, frequency, intensity and duration of the behaviours that are perceived as concerning, and the level of risk identified determines the risk reduction strategies, additional resources and frequency of review that will take place.

In conjunction with the carers/ parents, placing local authorities and involved professionals will complete the initial risk assessment. This plan (dependent upon age, level of understanding and willingness) will always include the views, choices and suggestions of the pupil. A key determinant will always be whether the level of risk/concern can be expected to be safely supported within the context of a school environment.

Each individual behaviour plan will include:

- Named involved parties;
- Date Plan completed;
- Assessment of behaviours seen as challenging;
- Risk assessment of the behaviour;
- Preferred responses and comforters of pupil or pupil;
- Review schedule;
- Signatures of agreement.

The Education Team across Polaris have a number of trained PRICE instructors who act as behaviour support specialists providing guidance on Behaviour Support Plans.

### **Physical presence**

Staff members' physical presence is a means of communicating authority and re-establishing safety and security. Presence by implication of authority, may restrict young people's movement for a brief period but is limited to:

- Standing close by to, or in front of a pupil
- Standing momentarily or temporarily in the way of a pupil.

Presence should become neither oppressive nor of excessive duration. Presence is likely to be most effective if complemented by a range of non-verbal communication signals and Persuasion or Dissuasion.

Physical Presence must be:

- Considered appropriate in the context of a particular situation or incident
- Used only in the context of engaging the pupil in discussion about the significance, relevance and consequences of his behaviour; and ended if it is met with resistance, when a decision will need to be made whether or not another form of intervention is appropriate

### **Restriction of access or exit**

In the ordinary course of maintaining a supportive and stable school, adults limit young people's liberty by requiring them to do things that they may prefer not to, including restricting them within a building. However, if the pupil complies with the reasonable request, for example not to go into another lesson because it will disturb the learning of others, restriction of liberty is not an issue. There may be occasions, however when a pupil has lost self-control, and is intent on serious disruption, self-harm, inflicting injury to others within that classroom, damage to property, or is considered potentially likely to do so, that it would be appropriate to prevent access to dangerous environments by locking doors to them.

Within our schools the offices, science lab or Art DT rooms could be considered such places. Restricting access under such circumstances is considered appropriate staff action. Occasionally in respect of the types of behaviour described previously, it may be necessary to prevent a distressed pupil from leaving a room by blocking the doorway by Physical Presence. This type of control is appropriate and permissible provided that:

- The duration of the intervention does not exceed ten minutes and the pupil is engaged in conversation aimed at de-escalating the crisis
- The action is a response to a crisis situation
- If the pupil physically resists a considered decision is made in respect of justification for an alternative form of intervention

The use of Restriction of Access must be recorded in the Serious Incident sheet and log.

### **Withdrawal**

Withdrawal describes the removal of a pupil from an environment where he may be gaining reinforcement to maintain a behaviour, to an area or room less likely to reinforce it with the purpose of enabling the pupil to regain self-control.

**Within School any area or room used for withdrawal must be unlocked and be monitored by staff at all times.**

The use of withdrawal must be recorded in an Information sheet.

### **Time-Out**

Time-out is part of a therapeutic programme to manage challenging behaviour. The individual with challenging behaviour is taken away from a place or an activity that is considered rewarding to them when their behaviour becomes unmanageable. The person is not necessarily confined, but can merely be taken out of a room or a few paces away from where an activity is being held.

Time-out is defined in paragraph 19.9 of the Mental Health Act 1983 Code of Practice as “a behaviour modification technique which denies a person, for a period of time, opportunities to participate in an activity or to obtain positive reinforcers following (normally immediately) an incident of unacceptable or unwanted behaviour, and which then returns the patient to their original environment. Time out should never include a locked room”.

### **One to one supervision**

One to One Supervision is where a member of staff or a number of staff are attached particularly to a pupil separated from his peers because of anxiety, distress or disruption with the purpose of providing him with continuous focused supervision and support until he is ready to resume usual activity.

It must:

- Only take place within the context of the usual environment and where increased staffing levels are likely to prove successful
- Be used positively and constructively, and aimed at actively engaging the pupil; promoting their safety, welfare, and emotional stability; and returning the pupil to a less extraordinary means of management

- Have had the approval of the senior member of staff on duty

### **Removal from classrooms**

Removal is where a pupil, for serious disciplinary reasons, is required to spend a limited time out of the classroom at the instruction of a member of staff. This is to be differentiated from circumstances in which they are asked to step outside of the classroom briefly for a conversation with a staff member and asked to return following this. The use of removal should allow for continuation of the pupil's education in a supervised setting. The continuous education provided may differ to the mainstream curriculum but should still be meaningful.

Removal from the classroom should be considered a serious sanction. It should only be used when necessary and once other behavioural strategies in the classroom have been attempted, unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal. Parents should be informed on the same day if their pupil has been removed from the classroom. As with all disciplinary measures, schools must consider whether the sanction is proportionate and consider whether there are any special considerations relevant to its imposition.

Removal should be used for the following reasons:

- a) to maintain the safety of all pupils and to restore stability following an unreasonably high level of disruption;
- b) to enable disruptive pupils to be taken to a place where education can be continued in a managed environment; and
- c) to allow the pupil to regain calm in a safe space.

Removal should be distinguished from the use of separation spaces (sometimes known as sensory or nurture rooms) for non-disciplinary reasons. For instance, where a pupil is taken out of the classroom to regulate his or her emotions because of identified sensory overload as part of a planned response. Or a pupil working away from the group due to educational needs or a planned activity

Headteachers will:

- Maintain overall strategic oversight of the school's arrangements for any removals, as set out in the school's behaviour policy
- Make sure the reasons that may lead to pupils being removed are transparent and known to all staff and pupil
- Ensure that the removal location is in an appropriate area of the school and stocked with appropriate resources, is a suitable place to learn and refocus, and is supervised by trained members of staff
- Design a clear process for the reintegration of any pupil in removal into the classroom when appropriate and safe to do so
- Collect, monitor and analyse removal data internally in order to interrogate repeat patterns and the effectiveness of the use of removal
- Make data-based decisions to consider whether frequently removed pupils may benefit from additional and alternative approaches, a pastoral review or investigation by the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENDCo), or whether specific departments or teachers may require more support
- Analyse the collected data to identify patterns relating to pupils sharing any of the protected characteristics and the removal policy is not having a disproportionate effect on pupils sharing particular protected characteristics

When dealing with individual removal cases, headteachers and teachers should:



- Consider whether any assessment of underlying factors of disruptive behaviour is needed
- Facilitate reflection by the pupil on the behaviour that led to their removal from the classroom and what they can do to improve and avoid such behaviour in the future
- Ensure that pupils are never locked in the room of their removal. There may be exceptional situations in which it is necessary to physically prevent a pupil from leaving a room in order to protect the safety of others and staff from immediate risk, but this would be a safety measure and not a disciplinary sanction and therefore is not covered by this section
- Ensure that the Pupils and Families Act 2014, the Equality Act 2010 and regulations under those Acts are being complied with
- If a pupil has a social worker, including if they have a Child in Need plan, a Child Protection plan or are looked-after, notify their social worker. If the pupil is looked-after, ensure their Personal Education Plan is appropriately reviewed and amended and notify their Virtual School Head
- Young people should not be removed from classrooms for prolonged periods of time without the explicit agreement of the head teacher. These should be given extensive support to continue their education including targeted pastoral support aimed to improve behaviour so they can be reintegrated and succeed within the mainstream school community.

### **Physical Intervention**

Staff will use physical intervention of a pupil if their behaviour is placing themselves or others safety at risk and will do so only as a very last resort. All staff will be trained in physical intervention by an approved provider. A log of training will be kept and maintained to ensure training is current. Significant physical interventions will be recorded and information passed on to all parties as soon as possible after the event.

In extreme cases staff have the right to ask for Police Intervention.

### **Physical Diversion / Supportive Contact**

This differs from Physical Control in the degree of force used. Physical Diversion may be, for example, holding a hand, placing a hand on the forearm, or putting an arm around a shoulder. Physical Diversion is a means of deflecting a pupil from destructive and/or disruptive behaviour. It involves little force, but serves to reinforce staff attempts to reason. It is important that:

- The intervening member of staff should already have an established relationship with the pupil
- Physical diversion should not arouse sexual expectation or feelings (if it does holding should cease)
- It should be ended if it is met with resistance, when a decision will need to be made whether or not another form of intervention is appropriate

This should be recorded by staff on an information sheet so that the SLT can monitor its use and effectiveness.

### **Physical Control** **Control restrictive physical intervention**

On occasions when de-escalation and conflict resolution techniques have failed restrictive physical intervention may have to be exercised. The concept of restrictive physical intervention involves ensuring that pupils are diverted from harming themselves, others, seriously damaging property, causing serious disruption to the maintenance of good order in school or are protected from the likelihood of them doing so. When no one is in control the desire to challenge and threaten often escalates. A proactive, orderly, caring environment is impossible to achieve and sustain when young people and staff believe they are not safe.

Restrictive physical intervention is usually used reactively or in an emergency and is always as a last resort. Restrictive physical intervention is used as part of a planned strategy. The Individual Plans detail the individual plan for each pupil. It may be for example part of an approach to prevent a pupil improperly absconding when it is perceived he would be at significant risk were they to do so.

Risk assessment decreases the frequency of use of either reactive or emergency restrictive physical intervention, and minimises the risk to young people and staff involved.

Restrictive physical intervention is the use of Physical Presence, Restriction of Access or Exit, Withdrawal, Physical Diversion, and Physical Control so concerning behaviour is controlled preventing injury to others, criminal acts self-injury and preventing harmful behaviours from spreading to others.

It is each member of staff's responsibility to make an assessment of each particular circumstance. All staff have a duty of care and are responsible for safeguarding and promoting all young people's welfare. Staff will need to decide if restrictive physical intervention is appropriate, and if it is, at what level.

It is not considered appropriate within School to adopt a blanket approach to the use of restrictive physical interventions exercised by staff. Staff will need to take the following factors into consideration:

- The behaviour of the pupil
- The known intention of the pupil (if known)
- Their known wishes, feelings and emotional state
- Their age and level of understanding
- The pupil's personal history
- The influence of other young people, family and friends
- Any future events which may be causing the pupil anxiety
- Their knowledge of the pupil
- How long the pupil has been placed with us
- The time of day, and the antecedents to the situation

In considering these factors particular attention needs to be given to the age and understanding of the pupil. As a pupil grows with age and maturity, he becomes more able to make decisions. However, competency is not only determined by age and maturity. The possible consequences of behaviour should be a significant factor in decision-making. A decision, which involves an assessment of the risk of potential harm, must not be left to a pupil to make alone and will either be a matter for negotiation, or solely the responsibility of the member of staff. The more danger that can be foreseen in a particular situation, the less likely it will be that the pupil is competent to make a decision.

Where a pupil is proposing to do something where there is clear potential for him injuring himself, others or seriously damaging property then staff can properly affect restrictive physical interventions to prevent him from doing so.

**The use of physical controls is not a substitute for using alternative strategies.**

Normally lesser forms of intervention should have been used first and de-escalation techniques exhausted. The onus is upon the member of staff to decide when this position has been reached.

**However, it is School's policy that Physical Control is used only:**

- Rarely,
- As a last resort, and
- Where any other course of action would be likely to fail.

**Physical Control must not be used to:**

- Punish
- Gain young people's compliance with staff instruction,
- Cause or threaten hurt, and pain
- Oppress, threaten, intimidate and bully.

**Physical Control in School should not normally extend beyond holding with both arms engaged in a standing, or sitting positions. However, staff can use Reasonable, Proportionate and Necessary actions in school.**

Headteachers and authorised school staff may also use such force as is reasonable given the circumstances when conducting a search for knives or weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco, fireworks, pornographic images or articles that they reasonably suspect have been or are likely to be used to commit an offence or cause harm.

Force may not be used to search for other items banned under the school rules.

When considering using reasonable force staff should, in considering the risks, carefully recognise any specific vulnerabilities of the pupil, including SEND, mental health needs or medical conditions.

Physical Control is the positive use of minimum force to divert a pupil from harming himself or others, seriously damaging property, seriously disrupting the good order of the school or to protect a pupil from the likelihood of them doing so.

**Physical controls in School must only be used:**

- Where a pupil is seriously harming themselves, others or seriously damaging property
- Where a pupil is in potential danger of seriously harming themselves, others or seriously damaging property
- At risk of committing a criminal act
- Where a pupil is engaging in behaviour prejudicial to the maintenance of good order and discipline or likely to lead to the breakdown of good order in a classroom

As a means of preventing a pupil absenting improperly if:

- The pupil is so acutely and seriously troubled that it is clear they are in immediate danger of inflicting serious self-harm, serious harm to others, or seriously damaging property
- The pupil is young and lesser interventions have either not been understood or successful and the pupil would on absconding be potentially in physical or moral danger
- The pupil is older but socially immature and vulnerable and consequently potentially at physical and moral risk
- Its use is intended to return a pupil to a less dangerous situation

Any use of physical control must be reported as soon as possible to the senior member of staff on duty by means of the Incident report. The Head teacher should be notified as soon as possible and the full report completed before the member of staff has left school on the same day. Should this prove very difficult the full report must be submitted within 24 hours. The Incident report requires comments, action, analysis, distribution, monitoring and reporting.

### **Post-incident Management**

Following all incidents where restrictive physical interventions have been employed, both staff and the pupil should be given separate opportunities to discuss the incident in a calm and safe environment.

De-briefing should only occur when those involved have recovered their composure and are in a position to debrief – this can take time.

Post incident de-briefs are designed to allow staff and young people to explore exactly what happened and the effects on the participants. They should not be used to apportion blame or to punish those involved. If there is any reason to believe that a pupil or member of staff has experienced injury or severe distress following the use of restrictive physical intervention, they should have access to appropriate medical or pastoral support systems. All incidents involving the use of restrictive physical interventions must be recorded on Incident Sheet.

The pupil and the member of staff involved should have their views recorded on the Incident Sheet. It is good practice to involve where possible, young people, parents/carers, social workers and placing authorities in planning and monitoring the use of physical interventions.

### **Talking with a pupil about an incident**

First and foremost, it needs to be remembered that all behaviour is a form of communication, and first seeking to allow a pupil to talk through what may have happened should be prioritised.

Staff will also have gained through their PRICE training that considering where a pupil may be within their 'cycle of arousal' is significant as to when it is appropriate to talk with the pupil about an incident or behaviour that is of concern. In the heat of the moment, both staff and pupil's may be dysregulated, and the priority needs to be self-regulating sufficiently to support a pupil to a more regulated emotional space through empathic connection before attempting to discuss the incident. At the right time, having a sensitive conversation with a pupil offers opportunity for reflection and encouragement as to managing situations, emotions and responses differently in the future.

The school is committed to trying to minimise the need for police involvement in dealing with behaviour we may find challenging, and we wish to avoid criminalising pupils unnecessarily and would therefore follow the appropriate procedures in contacting the SLT to discuss any concerns or issues.

Staff should offer consistency in their approaches to managing behaviours that may challenge. Any consequence should be reasonable, proportionate and made in belief that it will have a learning outcome for a pupil in modifying behaviours or actions.

The following principles should be applied:

- a. Never made 'in the heat of the moment'
- b. must be the exception, not the rule, a last resort.
- c. must not be imposed as acts of revenge or retaliation.
- d. Only instigated for persistent or serious concerns about behaviour where reminders and prompting has not been effective.
- e. Only used if there is a reasonable chance that they will have the desired impact of supporting a pupil to understand and modify behaviour.
- f. Ensure the pupil is aware that his/her behaviour is concerning and the reasoning why.
- g. Implementation should be for the minimal time duration, allowing the pupil the opportunity to make a fresh start as quickly as possible.
- h. must be clearly recorded

Whereby it is deemed appropriate to implement a strategy for supporting a pupil with understanding their responses or behaviours, staff should use positive and constructive dialogue with the pupil or guide them away from a confrontational situation. The aim always is to try to think flexibly about what the pupil may be thinking and feeling and to reflect this back appropriately to the pupil.

Staff should also understand their own emotional response to a confrontation or threat, and know when to withdraw, concede or seek help. When considering what may be the most effective intervention to use it should be informed by the below:

- Relevant for the pupil and related to his or her plan, age and circumstances.
- Realistic and sensitive.
- Not to induce feelings of shame.
- Understandable for pupils and staff.
- Used sparingly.
- Time limited.
- Justified.
- Be implemented at a point in time that is still current to the incident or behaviour.
- Follow good practice.
- Have been discussed with SLT.
- Recorded

The school recognises that the below are some strategies that may be considered after consultation with the SLT:

- i. Confiscation or withdrawal of equipment in order to protect a pupil/ pupil or another person from harm or injury, or to protect property from being damaged.
- j. Reparation, involving the pupil doing something to put right the wrong they have done (e.g. repairing damage or returning stolen property).
- k. Temporary and time limited removal of equipment.
- l. Loss of privileges

### **Confiscation of inappropriate items:**

There are two sets of legal provisions which enable staff to confiscate items from pupils.

1. The general power to discipline enables staff to confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a punishment, so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances.

2. Power to search without consent for 'prohibited items' including knives and weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs, stolen items, tobacco and cigarette papers and articles that have been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property. Weapons, knives and extreme or pupil pornography must always be handed over to the Police, otherwise it is for the teacher to decide if and when to return a confiscated item.

### **Behaviour outside school premises**

As a school we have statutory powers under Section 89(5) of the Education and Inspection Act 2006 to regulate the behaviour of pupils when off the school premises and not supervised by staff. Regulation must be reasonable and is as follows:

- consequences can be imposed when a pupil is on the school site or otherwise under the lawful control or charge of a member of staff.
- consequences can be imposed when a pupil is on a school trip or being transported -in these circumstances the pupil may have to wait until they are back in school for the consequence.
- cyber bullying - where parents or pupils are treated inappropriately using phones, internet, email or social networking by a pupil at school, they are advised to bring phones or copies of pages from sites into school, report using the CEOP's website, contact the Police or all three.

In acting reasonably to regulate pupil behaviour when off the school site, staff will consider the following principles:

- the severity of the behaviour.
- where the behaviour took place.
- the extent to which our school's reputation has been affected.
- the extent to which the behaviour would have an impact on the orderly running of our school.
- the extent to which the behaviour might pose a threat to another pupil or staff member (e.g. bullying behaviour, threatening behaviour, extortion).

### **Staff Development & Support**

The induction of new staff includes an introduction to our Trauma Informed Practice and Behaviour Policy. Staff briefings at the start and end of every day enables relevant information about pupils to be shared. Staff have opportunities to discuss difficulties within an open and non-judgemental framework. This may include informal and private conversations with colleagues, staff debriefing, formal mentoring, supervision, annual appraisal and staff meetings. Regular and on-going training is provided to ensure all staff are skilled professionals and are able to manage challenging behaviour in a consistent and professional manner.

All staff are expected to complete and stay up to date with PRICE training to meet the following objectives:

1. Recognising the importance of and using de-escalation techniques and working as a team when managing challenging behaviours.
2. Applying an understanding of the legal implications of positively handling.
3. Using a gradual and graded response to managing challenging behaviours and the use of positive handling as a last resort option.
4. By applying an increased awareness of the need for documentation for the recording and reporting of incidents.
5. Using active listening skills and participating in a process of debriefing, repair and reflection.

### **Pupil support systems**

Pupils are expected to adhere to the agreed school expectations and strive to meet and reflect on their personalised behaviour targets. They are always able to request a meeting with a member of staff that they feel comfortable with (known as 'Talk Time'), and more general concerns or suggestions can be voiced through social times such as shared play, circle time and nurture breakfast time.

If a pupil/ family/ carer makes a complaint or allegation against a member of staff, the onus is on the person/ persons making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true - it is not for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably. Suspension must not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force (see Complaints Procedure and/or Allegations against Staff documentation).

### **Liaison with parents/carers and other agencies**

Parental support for our Behaviour Policy, and the encouragement of their child to adhere to it, is an important part of making positive changes in their pupil's attitudes and behaviour.

Parents/carers are encouraged to contact our school whenever they need to with any concerns they may have and are encouraged to be proactive in sharing and solving problems as they arise.

### **Managing pupil transition**

Changing school is often a time of increased anxiety for pupils and may result in behaviours escalating. We aim to support pupil and parents/carers wherever possible to ease the transition of both coming into and leaving our school.

### **Organisation and facilities**

Teachers establish strong routines both in their classrooms and across our school which help greatly to establish the smooth running of the school.

### **Improper absence**

Young people occasionally leave the school but return within a reasonable period. However sometimes young people leave the site and do not quickly return. Young people who are improperly absent are categorised as:

- **Absenting**, whose whereabouts are known, and where circumstances suggest they are likely to be at only a low level of risk.
- **Not at their proper place**, whose whereabouts may or may not be known and where it is judged there is a low level of risk; and
- **Missing**, whose whereabouts are usually unknown, and where circumstances suggest they are likely to be at risk

### **Prevention of improper absence (This is often called Truancy).**

#### **What is truancy?**

Truancy means missing school on a regular basis for no good reason. It is also sometimes called 'unauthorised absence'.

By law, all pupils who are registered at school must attend regularly. Home-educated pupils do not have to attend school.

Truancy is a big problem, and it's on the increase.

Pupils in special schools, and those on free school meals, are most likely to truant.

### **How it can impact on pupils' futures:**

Truancy matters because:

- Pupils who miss school miss vital learning and social development time with their peers and staff
- Pupils who skip school don't do as well in tests, assessments and exams.
- If a pupil doesn't show up for lessons, their school record will suggest to future employers that they are unreliable.
- Being out of school during school hours gives a pupil time to kill - and research has shown that this can lead to criminal or antisocial behaviour.
- Parent/ Carers are responsible. Legally, parents/carers must ensure that pupils attend school - and if they don't, they could get a penalty notice (a fixed fine) or even face prosecution.

### **Parents and Carers are expected to:**

Taking an interest in your pupil's school life is a very important way to avoid truancy. The more engaged you are as a parent in your pupil's education, the more likely your pupil is to attend and enjoy school.

So always make time to talk to your pupil about how they're getting on at school. Keep in touch with your pupil's teacher and don't miss parent-teacher evenings. Also, try to attend school events if you possibly can.

Don't wait for niggles to become big problems before you address them with teachers. If you suspect your pupil of truancy, don't turn a blind eye. And don't cover up for your pupil or make excuses. Schools are now clamping down on absence. If you say that your son or daughter was ill, you'll probably be asked for precise details about the illness (or possibly a note from your GP) to make sure their absence was genuine.

Talk to your pupil about what's causing them to skip school. Some pupils truant because they're being bullied, either at school or on the way there. If this turns out to be the issue for your pupil, then it is something that you and the school need to tackle.

Talk to your pupil's teacher or the parent support adviser at school. They will probably suggest that you work together on a plan to track your pupil's attendance - this could mean you staying in close contact with the school regarding your pupil's appearance/non-appearance in the classroom.

Don't be afraid of talking to school staff about your concerns. Schools and local authorities realise the importance of working with parents to ensure pupils attend school. They will try to give you and your pupil the support you need.

### **The school will:**

- Register each pupil as they arrive in school each day. School will endeavour to find out the reasons for absence if the parent/ carer has not phoned in to school by 9.30 am.
- Staff will supervise all lessons, lunch and break times to minimise any issues which could lead young people to feel anxious.
- Work with parents/ carers to establish reasons for absence or a pupil who tries to leave site (without permission) during a school day



- The staff will work with the pupil/parents'/ carers to overcome any anxiety or issues leading to poor attendance.
- School will liaise with external agencies in a multi-agency approach should this be beneficial in supporting the pupil in their attendance

### **Missing Preventative Measures**

- Close adult supervision
- Prompt arrival of staff to all sessions and duties
- Registration of students from arrival via transport
- Small class sizes (no more than 6) ensure staff notice absence
- Identification of higher risk students
- Regularly updated recorded details and analysis of previous missing student incidents
- Staff assigned 100% supervision role for identified young people
- Response timeline – on first discovering a pupil is missing
- Member of staff first noticing student is missing to note the time, inform Pastoral team and perform an immediate search of the area covering the most obvious places and lasting no more than 5 minutes
- After 5 minutes, member of staff to enlist the help of staff and widen search for a further 5 minutes
- If the pupil has still not been located, staff to continue search for up to 30 minutes (for some with specific risks associated this time will be much reduced)
- Staff should inform reception of the original time of disappearance, and this should be recorded on a Missing Student Incident (MSI) log. Reception should also begin to fill out student contact details on the MSI log in anticipation of contacting police and/or parents/carers
- Reception to inform member of leadership team
- Available staff to be assigned an area to search. Staff should be deployed in pairs where possible. Each staff team to return to reception on completing search of designated area and to be reassigned if necessary
- If, 30 minutes after the time recorded on the MSI form, the student is still missing and has not been seen, a member of the leadership team/reception should use 101 (or 999 for those pupils deemed very high risk) to inform the police, ensuring that they have informed them that the student's special needs make them a high risk student
- There are specific pupils who are at such a high level of risk that 101, parent/ carer is contacted after the initial 5 minute check (see MSI plan)
- Parents/Carers should then be contacted. If applicable, social workers should also be informed
- If the student is found before the police are called, then the student can be returned to Pastoral support and talked to about the reasons for their absence. On an individual basis the decision will be made to return to class or to continue Pastoral support or to apply appropriate support/ consequences
- If the student is located after the police have been called, parents/carers should be called in to school to collect the student who should remain under the supervision of leadership staff
- If the police locate the student, staff will need to follow the advice of officers (within protocols)

If the pupil is on a school trip at the time of going missing the same protocol should be followed.

It may be deemed that it is not possible for staff to leave the rest of the group to search for the individual (risk assessed at the time by the lead teacher). If this is the case 101 would call immediately. The lead teacher would then contact school to notify the SMT.

**Read this policy in conjunction with:**

**Safeguarding: See *Safeguarding Policy***

**Bullying – See *Anti - Bullying Policy***

**Risk Assessment – See *Risk Assessment and Risk-Taking Policy & Health and Safety Policy.***

***Whistleblowing policy***

## **Appendix 1 – Useful tips for Staff**

The list below is neither exclusive nor prescriptive. The lists are however; an indicator of the dynamic influence staff behaviour is upon pupil or pupil behaviour.

### **First and foremost – Know your pupils and build positive professional relationships with them**

#### **DO Be Punctual and Prepare Well**

- Be there on time. Starting and finishing on time are very important. This sends signals to pupils about the importance and value that the adult places on the activity or task and makes colleagues' tasks easier
- Be efficient. The more efficient you are, the better you feel, the higher your level of confidence, the better things are likely to go.
- Whatever activity or task you are going to engage in good preparation and planning are essential
- Possess a firm grasp of whatever activity/skill you are wanting the group to experience
- In team situations communicate with colleagues as part of preparation
- Include alternative activities/strategies in case of initial plan not working

#### **Display Confidence**

- Maintain relaxed and non-threatening eye contact with the group and individuals; be sure to avoid nervous mannerisms and gestures

#### **Give Careful Instructions and Guidance**

- Use appropriate, simple and clear language
- Give clear statements of expected tasks which must be relevant to the ability levels of the pupils
- Make instructions brief and to the point
- Ask for questions
- Check if everything is clear via questioning
- Always make it clear that if they have any problems or difficulties all they have to do is ask you
- Find opportunities to praise positive attitudes and behaviour rather than being critical of negatives.

#### **Be Consistent and Fair**

- Pupils need to know that the standards you lay down are not going to be subject to arbitrary and unexpected change and that you are not going to treat individuals differently from each other for no apparent reason
- Give clearly explained expectations of behaviour

### **Firmness in the Face of Problems**

- Try and be clear and decisive
- Address and resolve situations don't let them drag on or escalate unattended
- Use appropriate body language and non-verbal communication
- Keep your word

### **Awareness of what is happening**

- Be alert to what is going on around you and ensure your attention is distributed across the group
- Keep as physically mobile as possible
- Try not to leave yourself vulnerable by becoming too engrossed with one individual or sub-group
- Awareness of the importance of role modelling; the part played by the adult is instrumental in setting a good example
- Keep giving positive feedback on effort and endeavour

### **Realistic Standards**

- Your expectations must be at an appropriate level and consistent with your colleagues
- Demonstrate your belief in the pupils' abilities
- Verbalise your confidence in their success

### **Enjoyment and Enthusiasm**

- Don't be afraid to show it; it shows the work, and the pupils have worth and importance
- It is more likely to stimulate interest and reduce boredom and apathy

### **Threats and Consequences**

- Always point out the possible consequences of a particular piece of behaviour
- Make use of the behaviour management systems already in the school
- Consider "positive actions" rather than "negative activity". For example, say "**when you have done....., then you can .....**"

Rather than "**if you do not do ....., then you will not be allowed to .....**"

## **DON'T**

- Make wild threats that you find hard to enforce or get support for
- Be unclear and hurried in speech and actions
- Overreact to behaviours
- Issue complicated instructions
- Show favouritism
- Be inconsistent
- Collude, provoke by ridicule or sarcasm
- Have inappropriate expectations
- Belittle effort or endeavour
- Confuse firmness and hostility

## **Attitude and Approach**

Staff members' attitude and approach in all situations affects the quality of relationships with pupils. In situations of rising tension staff attitude and approach is crucial. It can either improve or reduce the chance of success.

## **DO**

- Appear calm and collected if possible
- Be clear and firm about boundaries of acceptability
- Show a non-biased nature.
- Be prepared to listen.
- Know when the situation is in stalemate and don't create a win/lose situation without it being a calculated decision
- Be flexible in thought and response
- Spontaneously provide a range of roles from assertiveness to reflective support
- Value people as individuals
- Be a sensitive, objective observer who can make valid observations
- Trust others and perceive them as being capable of solving their own problems
- Seek to understand situations from the point of view of others and base your own behaviour on this perception

- Be concerned primarily with people and their reactions as well as things and events
- Try to understand the behaviour of others in terms of how they think and feel and behave and understand now; don't let past influences hinder you, make them help
- Perceive others as being friendly and enhancing rather than as hostile and threatening
- Perceive others as being in control of their own development rather than shaped by external events
- Understand the mechanics of adult influence so that you can diagnose the present situation and determine the range of possible reactions to it
- Develop a confident and positive regard for yourself - this should give you reassurance and be transmitted to others in terms of your outward confidence about being able to deal with things
- Give the pupil guided choices and options that allow them to take some level of responsibility for decision making

### **DON'T**

- Be fooled into thinking you should always be able to deal with any situation, and don't automatically assume/expect colleagues to do so without your support
- Be insensitive
- Be unfair or hostile
- Use high key intervention where low key will suffice
- Emphasise situation out of all proportion
- Allow yourself to be wound up
- Carry on even when you know you are wrong
- Restart the argument or incident once calm has been achieved
- Use unnecessary peer group pressure

### **Non-verbal behaviour**

The primary reason for using and interpreting non-verbal signals is to de-escalate at a very early stage or just to signal a very low-key adult involvement. There will usually be a response to this if signals are clearly sent. Similarly acknowledging non-verbal signals from within the group or from an individual will enable early, low-key staff intervention to take place.

### **DO**

- Seek clear eye contact when you are making an important point
- Be aware of the signals which you give out by your body position and posture

- Be aware of the physical distance between yourself and others.
- Nod your head to indicate attentiveness
- Smile to show agreement
- Use raised eyebrows to question
- Use hand, shoulder and whole-body gestures to support discussion
- Use physical contact as reassurance
- Seek signals that your message has been correctly received
- Use proximity as early intervention
- Use your observation of others non-verbal actions or reactions to judge your own level of intervention.

### **DON'T**

- Invade personal space
- Stand over pupils in a threatening manner
- Use staring threatening eye contact
- Be oblivious to signals within the environment
- Appear to lack confidence
- Appear tense, appear intimidated or retaliate with physical gestures
- Use inappropriate physical contact with particular pupils
- Remain static

### **Verbal behaviour**

Verbal communication operates at many levels within the caring and therapeutic processes at the home. It is the single most important skill staff have in helping pupils towards personal growth, and employed correctly is the most powerful de-escalation skill staff possess. The following format of four stages is a very useful way of conceptualising what you are trying to do and hence help you guide the conversation through to a positive solution.

**Calm the Situation:** It is important to calm a situation where the temperature is rising, as nothing will be listened to if the other individual(s) is too agitated.

- Choose appropriate timing of initial verbal intervention
- Acknowledge the existence of a problem
- Use reflective listening

- Show genuine concern and understanding
- Show empathy and allow the individual to express their feelings
- Give reassurance and offer support
- Careful use of humour may be employed
- Silence is useful - it is choosing not to speak - and can also be thinking time
- You may ask directly for a particular response

In effect what you are trying to do is bring some calm, order and clarity to the situation. Make sure the pupil(s) are 'with you' before going on to the next stages as too early an attempt to move on will only escalate things.

**Analyse the Problem:** Now is the time to help the pupil or pupil register and understand what is happening.

- Use non-threatening dialogue appropriate to the pupil or pupil and situation as well as corresponding body language
- Be aware of voice quality, tone, volume, cadence, timing and making good use of pauses and appropriate replies
- Paraphrase what is being said and check back with the pupil or pupil that it is accurate
- If necessary, impose some structure to explain things
- Put relevant information together
- Put things in some order
- Repeat and stress important points
- Take the most important messages first
- Be consistent and avoid confusing or conflicting messages
- Present facts/issues which may not be known to the pupil or pupil
- Use personalisation and former relationship factors

**Problem-Solve:** After getting to the central issue start to get the pupil or pupil to look for/at solutions.

- Go through options
- Put the onus on the pupil or pupil to resolve the situation, pointing out possible consequences, offering choices and alternatives, if possible, where he will not "lose face"
- Make your language clear and understandable so that messages are not misinterpreted
- Point out that they are in control of the situation - element of choice in escalation or de-escalation is theirs



- Possibly offer, "If I were you.... but it's up to you", scenarios if the pupil or pupil is stuck
- Use the word "we" when in discussion and explain that you can work things out together

**Resolve Situation:** This is the point at which some restoration of "normality" occurs.

- Check with the pupil or pupil that he understands what is expected of him
- You may need to use input from others, fresh faces and new ideas to the situation
- Set appropriate, clear boundaries but be prepared to be flexible according to the situation at the time
- Reinforce the point that it may have been easier to have resolved this with adult help earlier than have let it get this far
- Give positive feedback for having resolved the situation so that this might be more of a preferred option next time

### **DON'T**

- Put pupil or pupil in position of no escape
- Use destructive criticism
- Use reminders of previous situations the pupil or pupil might prefer to forget
- Use personal details of a pupil or pupil in front of group
- Make unrealistic threats or use provocative tone of voice
- Lose your temper
- Make insensitive remarks
- Use "you will" statements
- Get involved in "yes you did - no I didn't" arguments with the pupil or pupil
- Argue with adults present
- Use inappropriate language
- Shout or allow raised voices

### **Challenge**

Most challenging behaviour is either pre-empted or dealt with so quickly that a casual or unenlightened observer might easily fail to notice any action taken by staff. However, in any establishment seeking to create and maintain a secure, stable and caring environment for pupils, and particularly one where pupils' self-control are often only emerging, clear limits need to be set. Even in the most considered environments sometimes the behaviour of pupils is unacceptable. On such occasions it is vital that staff feel comfortable and confident in coping with challenging and difficult behaviour.

- Correct targeting - the pupil or pupil reprimanded should be the one who instigated or engaged in the challenging behaviour
- Criticism of the challenging behaviour not the pupil - the reprimand should emphasise disapproval of the act, not the pupil or pupil. "Don't call names because it is unpleasant and hurtful." is better than, "You are stupid if you call people names."
- Firmness - a reprimand should be clear, firm and assertive avoiding any suggestion of pleading for co-operation
- Mutual respect - the member of staff must treat the pupil or pupil with respect in order for their disapproval to matter
- Positive emphasis - the reprimand should be applied consistently in all situations to all pupils
- Consistency - reprimands should be applied consistently
- Additional cues - accompany the reprimand with appropriate non- verbal cues, such as eye contact, to increase the force of the exchange
- Avoidance of idle threats - if a reprimand embodies an implied threat, it must be carried out.  
If it cannot be carried out it should not be made
- A quiet word - quiet and private reprimands can often be more effective than loud, public interventions
- Keep it professional, be polite and respectful- use please and thank you
- Do not collude with a pupil or pupil in order to overcome a situation in the short term,  
e.g. "I know that was a bit unfair but do it for me. You and I don't have a problem, do we?"

### **Critical challenging behaviour**

There are some behaviours that can severely inhibit the school's positive ethos and philosophy. They may totally disrupt the caring and therapeutic process that on the comparatively rare occasions they occur a consistent response, albeit of retribution, and deterrence is needed.

#### **These behaviours are:**

- violence to another pupil or pupil and or adults
- Deliberate damage to the building, its equipment or others possessions
- Unprovoked or premeditated bullying
- Repeated limit/rule breaking
- Behaviour within a group situation that is likely to incite negative behaviour in others

Any intended increase in the severity or length of the sanction must be approved by the senior member of staff on duty.



## Appendix 2

### Guidance on specific behaviour issues

#### Pupil-on-pupil sexual violence and sexual harassment

Following any report of pupil-on-pupil sexual violence or sexual harassment offline or online, the school will follow the general safeguarding principles set out in KCSIE, especially Part 5. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/keeping-pupils-safe-in-education>.

The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) is the most appropriate person to advise on the school's initial response.

The school takes its responsibility very seriously and are clear across their whole culture that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable, will not be tolerated, and that pupils whose behaviour falls below expectations will be sanctioned. Each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The school will make clear to all staff the importance of challenging all inappropriate language and behaviour between pupils. The school will refer to the Respectful School Communities toolkit for advice on creating a culture in which sexual harassment of all kinds is treated as unacceptable. <https://educateagainsthate.com/resources/respectful-school-communities-self-review-signposting-tool-2/>

The school will never normalise sexually abusive language or behaviour by treating it as 'banter', an inevitable fact of life or an expected part of growing up. They will advocate strenuously for high standards of conduct between pupils and staff; and demonstrate and model manners, courtesy and dignified/respectful relationships.

Where relevant, pupils who fall short of these behaviour expectations may be sanctioned whilst other investigations by the police and/or pupils' social care. Responding assertively to sexually inappropriate behaviour is an important intervention that helps prevent challenging, abusive and/or violent behaviour in the future. The school will seek appropriate support for pupils exhibiting sexually inappropriate and/or harmful sexual behaviour. It is essential that all victims are reassured they will be supported, kept safe, and are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward.

Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

In instances where reports of sexual abuse or harassment are proven deliberately invented or malicious, the school will consider whether any disciplinary action is appropriate for the individual. The designated safeguarding lead will make any referrals into support services as appropriate.

#### Behaviour incidents online

Negative and inappropriate interactions online can damage the school's culture and lead to individuals or groups of pupils feeling that school is unsafe.

The school is clear that the same standards of behaviour are expected online as they are offline. Inappropriate online behaviour, including bullying, the use of inappropriate language and the soliciting and sharing of nude or semi-nude images and videos, will be addressed in accordance with the same principles as offline behaviour. This includes all staff following the

school's pupil protection policy and speaking to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) when an incident raises a safeguarding concern.

In cases where a school suspects a pupil of criminal behaviour online, the school will follow the guidance set out in the section below on suspected criminal behaviour.

When an incident involves nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, the member of staff should refer the incident to the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) as the most appropriate person to advise on the school's response. Handling such reports or concerns can be especially complicated and schools should follow the principles as set out in keeping pupils safe in education.

The UK Council for Internet Safety also provides the following guidance to support school staff and designated safeguarding leads: Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: advice for education settings working with pupils. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-pupils-and-young-people/sharing-nudes-and-semi-nudes-advice-for-education-settings-working-with-pupils-and-young-people>

Many online behaviour incidents amongst young people occur outside the school day and off the school premises. Parents are responsible for this behaviour. However, often incidents that occur online will affect the school culture. The school will sanction pupils when their behaviour online poses a threat or causes harm to another pupil, and/or could have repercussions for orderly running of the school, when the pupil is identifiable as a member of the school or if the behaviour could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

**Mobile phones** Mobile phones cannot be used during the school day. Allowing access to mobiles in school introduces complexity and risks, such as distraction, disruption, bullying and abuse.

Mobile phones will be collected on arrival in school and stored safely until home time where it will be returned to the pupil.

**Suspected criminal behaviour** The cases where a member of staff or headteacher suspects criminal behaviour, the school will make an initial assessment of whether an incident should be reported to the police by gathering enough information to establish the facts. These initial enquiries should be documented, and the school will make every effort to preserve any relevant evidence. If a decision is reached by a member of the SLT that a report to the police is required, the school will ensure any further action does not hinder any police action taken. This is notwithstanding that; the school can continue investigations and enforce their own sanctions, provided they do not conflict with police action.

When making a report to the police, it will often be appropriate to make in tandem a report to local pupils' social care. In most cases that the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) would take the lead.