



Witham Oaks Academy

Behaviour and Relationships Policy

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School Values

At our school we believe in the importance of relationships, ensuring children and young people feel valued, safe and secure, providing a sense of connection with a member of staff and a belonging to the whole school community.

Our school reflects the values of the Essex Approach to understanding behaviour and supporting emotional wellbeing known as Trauma Perceptive Practice (TPP)

- Compassion and Kindness
- Hope
- Connection and Belonging

We endeavour to make sure that at our school these values run through all the school policies and practice.

School Ethos

It is a core aim of our school that every member of the school community feels valued and respected, and that each person is treated fairly and well. We are a caring community whose values are built on mutual trust and respect for all. This Behaviour and Relationships policy is therefore designed to support the way in which all members of the school can live and work together in a caring way. It aims to promote an environment where everyone feels happy, safe and secure, and able to learn.

We value each individual child and work with families, the community and beyond to offer diverse experiences and support. We develop children and young people to be confident, life-long learners and compassionate, respectful members of their community and the world. We always prioritise the safety of our children and young people and staff. Everything we do in school is underpinned by our safeguarding procedures.

We recognise that children and young people have a 'window of tolerance' within which they feel safe, secure and regulated. When asked to do something outside of this window they can experience stress and react accordingly. Our aim is to help our children and young people to widen their window of tolerance through teaching them about the stress-response in the brain and how they can learn to self-regulate through co-regulation with adults.

Strong relationships between staff and pupils are vital. Our staff are fair and consistent with children (considering individual needs) enabling pupils to feel safe. Equally, our staff are approachable and there to assist and we help our children to understand this. It is also recognised that for some children and young people, variance on these processes will be made in order to meet any specific social, emotional, learning or other needs which require a personalised approach.

A Relational Behaviour Model

At our school we adopt and use the relational behaviour model which is the approach from TPP. The key principles are as follows:

- Behaviour is something to interpret.
- Children and young people are prone to make mistakes and highly responsive to the environment and context.
- Behaviour management is predominantly through relationships.
- Children/young people who don't manage should be understood and included.
- Boundaries and limits are to keep everyone safe and to meet everyone's needs.
- Consequences are only used within a process of restore and repair.
- 'Inappropriate behaviour' is a sign of unmet need, stress (difficulty in coping), lack of understanding and skills.
- The causes of the difficulties are mostly in the environment and within the context of relationships.
- The solutions lie in understanding what the behaviour tells us about the child/young person and their need.

General Expectations

We have high expectations for our children and young people, while recognising some children and young people have specific needs. The following expectations cover all times of the school day and where children and young people are representing the school out of hours or off site. This means we:

- encourage a positive attitude to learning within a safe, happy environment
- promote high expectations and enable children/young people to become independent responsible learners
- encourage a sense of respect for our community and our environment
- believe that clear, consistent routines and systems are essential to support children and young people's development and ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone in our school community.

It is everyone's responsibility to remind and support children and young people where these expectations are not met. Equally it is important to comment positively when they are. Staff model expected behaviours, attitudes and habits.

Any behaviour that falls below the expectations of our school (e.g., disruption to learning, unkind or inconsiderate actions), will require some level of intervention. Remembering that every interaction is an intervention, it is important to remember that the strongest approach to support a child/young person is through their relationship with the adult. At all points we try to ensure we keep a strong connection with the child/young person having difficulties. We use positive recognition, as appropriate, to ensure the children or young people know we are still there, and we recognise their effort and any changes they have made.

At our school, staff ensure good routines are in place for:

- | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------------|
| • Start and end of day | • Moving around the school |
| • Transition times | • Break and Lunchtimes |
| • Lining up incl. assemblies | • In the dining hall |

What do we do to teach and promote positive management of behaviour?

We believe that all behaviour is communication, and it is our job as adults to understand what that behaviour is telling us. We need to become 'stress detectives' and ascertain both why, and why now? Finding the cause of the behaviour will help us to work alongside the child or young person in order to help them to regulate themselves both in the short term and in the longer term through developing strategies to aid their resilience.

Simple steps towards effective behaviour management:

- For all to understand that behaviour is a form of communication
- Establish a positive supportive relationship with the children.
- Ensure that children are stimulated and working on purposeful activities.
- Regularly reward positive behaviour, with attention, praise and encouragement.
- Identify problem areas/sessions and try to divert or modify the child's behaviour before there is a need for disciplinary measures.
- Be very familiar with the school rules. Use code reminders, and be clear, polite, consistent and firm about the behaviour boundaries.
- Always remain calm when speaking to children. This helps maintain authority and confidence. It also preserves the positive relationship with the child/children. Whenever possible, ensure that the child is calm and reasonably receptive before you discuss their behaviour.
- Avoid discussing behaviour incidents in public. If the child feels humiliated in front of his/her peers the reaction will often be more extreme, than in a more private setting.
- Try to avoid confrontation. If this is impossible, ensure a respectful approach is always used. Always focus on the behaviour rather than the individual.
- Be consistent in using school procedures.

Raising children's self-esteem is the most effective way of improving their behaviour. If the child spends much of his/her time with adults who concentrate on their failings, their self-esteem or self-image may be damaged. Their emotional, social and academic development could be blighted. If, however, a child experiences respect for their opinions, has appropriate behaviour reinforced and is given time and approval, they will develop a sense of security, identity, belonging and competence.

Circle Time

Circle Time and class meetings provide a structured forum for class discussions. They give teachers great insight into pupils' attitudes, concerns and opinions on school topics. Within this framework, topics such as making rules and behaviour can be discussed in an open, democratic way. Circle Time promotes group co-operation and cohesion as well as raising self-esteem. There is a format to follow with definite rules:

- Only one person can speak at a time (e.g. a special object might be passed round the circle and a person can only speak if he/she is holding the object)
- Everyone has the right to contribute or not to the discussion
- This is supported time to develop the skills of discussion and how we share our thought and ideas kindly and appropriately

Circle Time can be very rewarding for both staff and pupils as they build up trust with one another. It is essential to ensure that all participants in Circle Time feel comfortable. There are many 'warmup' activities that can be used to achieve this.

Celebration of Achievement

The whole school approach to behaviour improvement is a positive approach and the celebration of achievement is an essential part of this. The more valued a child feels the more positive is their self-image. When children feel their efforts and achievements are recognised by the other children and adults within a school, they will strive to achieve more. Fundamental to any whole school, positive approach to behaviour improvement is the support of the Headteacher.

The Co-Headteacher's Input

Promotion of a positive system of behaviour improvement must begin with the Co-Headteachers. It is essential that they have a very active and high-profile participation in the celebration of achievement. At Witham Oaks Academy this happens through:

Co-Headteacher stickers

The Co-Headteachers have a collection of special stickers that the children can choose from when they bring examples of excellent work. The sticker is attached to the work and initialled by the Co-Headteachers; a copy may be taken to send home for parents/carers.

'Headteacher Award' certificates

These certificates are awarded for participation in special events or contributing to school life in a special way. These can be individual or class awards [e.g. participation in District Sports, Music Festival. These are often presented at a whole school assembly.

'Star of the Week' certificates

Every Monday, a whole school assembly is held to celebrate the special achievement of one child from each class. The Co-Headteachers leads this assembly and the class teacher explains to the whole school how and why the child has been nominated for the award.

Contact with Parents/Carers

Staff often inform parents personally of their child's special achievement, by telephone, before or after school and through the Pupil Planner, newsletters, postcards or emails.

House System

Children are awarded Dojo points for demonstrating our school values. These act as House Points, acknowledging a wide variety of achievements and successes. This includes acts of kindness to others, good manners, and identifying mistakes in their work and using them as learning opportunities. Every child belongs to one of the four houses, and the House Captains count and record the total number of Dojo Points for each house weekly.

Walkabouts

The Senior Leadership Team spend time in classes, observing and talking to children, looking at work and celebrating individual/class successes. This is very supportive for class teachers and indicates to the children

that the senior management of the school takes an active interest in their classroom activities. Positive comments show appreciation of the hard work resulting in a good classroom atmosphere.

MDA stickers

MDAs on the playground award stickers and/or House Points for several reasons including appropriate behaviour, kindness to others and for making healthy lunch choices. This helps the children have a sense of continuity and consistency all through the day.

Viewing behaviour as a learning process

At our school we accept and understand that learning how to regulate our behaviour is a learning process. At times children and young people will push limits, boundaries, and societal norms as part of their normal development. They may also react in different ways to stress, boredom, lack of understanding, over-excitement, and disappointment. Using the relational model, we offer support, help and guidance to the child or young person along with co-regulation so they can develop strategies to regulate themselves and develop resilience for the future. It is our role, as fully developed adults, to help guide children and young people, to make helpful and positive choices when they can by relating to them and helping them to restore and repair as required. We know that this is the best way to respond to our child/young person's behaviour and maintain our relationship with them. The approach we strive for is based on the premise of 'connection before correction'.

Our general responses incidents

Our school believes that all behaviour is communication and in the power of using restorative approaches.

In using this process at our school, we use the following questions:

- What has happened?
- What were you feeling or thinking at the time? (What Zone were you in?)
- Who has been affected and how do you think they might feel?
- What choice(s) can you make next time to avoid this happening again?
- How could this be resolved fairly?
- Do you feel that you have been listened to?
- What Zone are you in now?

At our school the staff work with the child or young person using psychoeducation so that they understand how their brain works and reacts to stress responses. By doing so, we provide them with the opportunity to recognise when they are becoming dysregulated and assist them (using co-regulation) in developing self-regulation strategies for the future. By developing new strategies, this ensures that they have learnt from an incident so that they can be more successful next time. The impact of our approach is evident in the relationships forged throughout the school.

At Witham Oaks Academy, we integrate the *myHappymind programme* into our behaviour and relationships policy to support pupils' wellbeing, self-regulation, and resilience. This evidence-based approach helps children develop a positive mindset, emotional awareness, and coping strategies, enabling them to manage challenges effectively. By teaching pupils about self-regulation, character strengths, and gratitude, we empower them to take ownership of their behaviour and relationships. When addressing behaviour incidents, we use the language and principles of *myHappymind* to guide restorative conversations, helping pupils reflect on their emotions, recognise their strengths, and develop

proactive strategies for making positive choices in the future.

As part of the restore and repair process, they have the chance to show the person that has been affected by their action that they are sorry. This can be in the form of verbal, written, picture, or an action. This involves connection before correction, ensuring pupils feel heard and understood before addressing their actions. Through restorative dialogue, empathy, and emotional regulation support, pupils are guided to reflect on their behaviour, understand its impact, and take steps to repair relationships.

Our restore and repair process includes calm de-escalation, structured reflection, and practical reparation, ensuring that pupils learn from incidents and feel a sense of belonging. Staff facilitate non-judgemental discussions to help pupils develop self-awareness and alternative strategies for future situations. As part of this, staff support conversations where pupils affected have the opportunity to express how the actions of others have made them feel. This empowers all pupils involved to take responsibility, develop empathy, and make amends, including offering a genuine apology as part of the resolution process.

Accepting an apology-

Do not allow the child to say: 'That's okay.'

Encourage this instead:

'Thank you for saying sorry. I accept your apology, but please don't hurt/disrespect/hit/kick me again.'

Such processes do not shy away from using consequences where logical, appropriate and proportionate. They also focus on the need to take responsibility for finding a constructive way forward for all concerned. This might mean a sincere apology followed by an act of kindness. Such approaches encourage the child or young person in our school to reflect and consider not only the consequences of their actions on themselves, but also the impact of their actions on others. We also support them in developing strategies to help the child or young person to regulate themselves to avoid the situation happening again in the future.

Our approach is rooted in empowering children to take ownership of their actions and develop a strong sense of personal responsibility. In the first instance, we encourage pupils to communicate directly with their parents or carers if there has been a discussion or consequence relating to their behaviour. This fosters honesty, accountability, and the development of self-reflective skills in a supportive environment. Should parents or carers wish to seek further clarification or information, we kindly ask that they contact the school office via email. In line with our Communications Policy, the relevant member of staff will respond within three working days, either before or after school hours.

Consistent Management Plans

Identified children may have a Consistent Management Plan. These outline the school's main areas of concern and strategies to manage and support the child. The child and their parents/carers will be given the opportunity to discuss the plan before it is finalised. Parents/carers, child and teacher sign a copy so all stakeholders are aware of and support the document and its content. The programmes are implemented by all adults involved with the teaching and learning for the child.

United Nations (UN)

This is a designated classroom, where the children can take themselves or be taken should they need time away from the playground. The area is supervised by the Behaviour Lead or another member of the Leadership Team.

If a serious incident occurs at lunchtime all concerned will be directed to UN. The child/children will have the opportunity to discuss their choices and the incident will be logged and recorded. Once the incident has been resolved to the satisfaction of all concerned the child/children may then return to the playground or possibly spend some time playing inside. Deliberate physical behaviours towards others will incur a **one-day** playground ban for the first offence and **three-days** thereafter. For persistent physical and unsafe behaviours, it may be necessary to make alternative arrangements.

If a child has an injury, that prevents them from doing PE, they must play in Nurture Club with a friend at lunchtime until well enough to go back outside and resume their PE lessons. At breaktime, children can sit in the medical room.

Nurture room

By invitation, for those children who wish to have a quieter playtime, we have a designated area where they may spend time socialising away from the playground. On offer, are opportunities for children to play games, complete mindfulness activities or just chat quietly with friends.

Playground Procedures:

Morning Breaktime

The members of staff on duty monitor behaviour on the playground. At the end of play time, the whistle will blow indicating that all children should stand still. This is then followed by a second whistle to indicate that all children should walk sensibly to their lines. This is to encourage a calm end to play ready to begin the next session. All incidents of inappropriate behaviour are dealt with, initially by members of staff on duty, but if the situation escalates the child/children involved in the incident will be asked to attend the UN, to discuss and resolve this. If a breaktime incident requires further action, all involved will come back at lunchtime to discuss further.

Lunchtime

Lunchtimes can, at times, present difficulties for some children. It is very important for the children to have some unstructured time, when they organise their own play. All midday staff have a very positive, supportive approach to the children, which then helps to make the lunchtime procedures so successful.

At Witham Oaks Academy, 'Playground Pals' are introduced at the beginning of the first half term to support the younger members of the school and will organise playground activities/games.

Minor incidents at lunchtime are dealt with on the playground by the adults supporting, who record the incident in lunchtime books. These logs are monitored after each lunchtime and all incidents and/or issues reviewed by the Behaviour Lead. They are recorded on My Concern. If a child's name begins to appear regularly in these records, he/she is asked to come to the UN to discuss their behaviour, the reasons behind it and the consequences of continued issues.

Eating Arrangements

A high standard of behaviour is expected of the children when eating. Appropriate table manners and dining etiquette is encouraged, including the correct use of cutlery and quiet discussion with table members. At times, usually while children are being served their lunch, we ask children to focus on eating without talking. This is to promote calmness and ensure a sensory-friendly environment to support those pupils who may react strongly to loud noises. We have a special 'Golden Table' at lunchtimes to recognise and reward those pupils who display good dining hall etiquette.

Using logical consequences

Consequences can be a useful response to behaviours, remembering that some behaviours result in positive consequences. When responding to unwanted behaviour, the consequences we use in our school always look at the incident with the knowledge of the stress response (and how the brain reacts), the relational model and with the aim to repair and restore through relationships.

Our school applies consequences using the following principles:

- Adults are clear that it is a consequence
- Consequences are delivered with empathy and understanding of the context
- Consequences are logical and fair
- Consequences are appropriate to the CYPs level of understanding
- Consequences keep CYP safe. They can be proactive based on lessons learnt from previous incidents.
- Consequences protect the relationship.

Evidence shows that sanctions alone have limited long-term effects, so it is important for the pupil to see a logical link between their behaviour and the response. Consequences should, wherever possible, have a clear link to the incident and help the pupil to learn how to behave more appropriately should a similar situation occur again, tailoring this to the needs of the individual.

Where possible, a logical consequence (natural reparation) is used e.g., clean graffiti off the door, clean up the mess, pay for replacement of item. Where this is not possible a close alternative should be used.

If the child has not corrected their behaviour, a quick and clear verbal caution, relating to the Code of Conduct, will be quietly and assertively delivered with a clear awareness of a related consequence should they continue with the behaviour.

Microscript:

- *I've noticed...*
- *I need you to...*
- *If you choose ...that would be great, as that shows you are being safe/respectful/ready to learn/responsible.*
- *If you choose not to a consequence will be issued.*

It is helpful to view consequences as protective and/or educational. Best practice suggests that all protective consequences should run alongside educational consequences, as it is unlikely that long-term change will occur without this.

Protective consequences: these are required to protect the rights of others and keep a child or young person safe. At our school this may include:

- co-regulation to help develop self-regulation strategies
- change of school day/timetable
- arrangements for access to outside space
- child or young person escorted in stressful situations
- differentiated teaching space

Educational consequences: at our school we use these to teach, encourage, support and motivate the child or young person to behave differently next time through better understanding. These should always be logical, appropriate and proportionate. Examples include:

- ensuring the child or young person completes the task they have disrupted
- rehearsing/modelling situations through intentional teaching of prosocial behaviour
- ensure the child or young person assists with repairs where they have caused damage (when possible and practical)
- intentionally provide educational opportunities for the child or young person to learn about the impact of certain actions and behaviours
- providing the child or young person with an opportunity to 'put things right' through a process of reflecting, repairing and restoring relationships.

Codes of Conduct

Our ethos at the school is about mutual respect for all.

At the beginning of each new school year the class teacher and children will discuss the whole school Code of Conduct:

- Be safe
- Be respectful
- Be ready to learn
- Be responsible

This will be the basis for all classroom behaviour improvement. The children and staff will discuss what each code means and will be reminded of this at the start of each session throughout the day. These codes will be revisited at regular intervals throughout the school year.

Behaviour (Examples)	Possible Consequences/outcomes (Examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disruptive calling out• Distracting others• Refusal to complete assigned activity or learning task despite all efforts to support• Running in school• Disrespectful comments• Swearing (without thought and/or malice)• Ignoring instructions from staff• Being late after break• Leaving the classroom without permission	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Tactically ignoring of unwanted behaviour and praising/rewarding pupils who are displaying the positive behaviour you want to see• Use of microscript as a reminder about school Code of Conduct and logical consequence if unwanted behaviour continues• Short reflection time in designated area within the classroom• Relocation to a neighbouring year group classroom or room, to complete work or give

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Throwing something without malice • Invading personal space • Being impolite including dropping litter • Inappropriate use of uniform (e.g. pulling another person(s) tie) • Targeted disruption of others learning • Continued refusal to comply with instructions • Rudeness or inappropriate response • Silly in the toilets 	<p>additional opportunity to self-regulate away from possible triggers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of break time/lunchtime to complete missed learning/tasks in class • All incidents recorded on MyConcern • Parental contact by class teacher via telephone call or face-to-face • Behaviour lead notified.
Relatively higher impact examples	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any of the above poor behaviours described happening persistently • Serious and ongoing bullying, including online • Harmful behaviour • Any discriminatory/prejudice behaviour • Causing significant, deliberate damage to school property including throwing of furniture • Possession/use of prohibited items • Serious assault on a student / member of staff • Swearing directly at others (with thought and/or malice) • Violence • Absconding from class without permission • Stealing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour lead and SLT notified • Opportunity for reflection. • Restorative approach followed. • Incident form completed for discriminatory incidents. • Incident recorded on MyConcern. • Parents contacted and invited to attend a meeting with class teacher and other relevant members of staff. • Outcome will be personalised based on previous behaviour, severity, response from pupil(s). • Withdrawn from class or changes to timetable leading to internal suspension • Parents/carers to be informed of decision via phone or face to face. • If response leads to Fixed-term suspension – parents/carers also notified in writing. Re- integration meeting to be held directly after fixed-term suspension.

Use of suspension as a consequence

Our school still applies the protective and educational approach to consequences even if the outcome is suspension: protective as a suspension insists on a short-term change in routine and becomes educational when the provision is more personalised to meet the child/young person's needs.

Appropriate use of suspension is to allow the adults time to make the necessary adjustments to meet the needs of the child/young person going forward. This includes:

- reflecting, identifying needs and amending plans
- using the time to prepare psychoeducation or other appropriate interventions to support
- using co-regulation to develop self-regulation strategies.

We understand that whilst a suspension might mark a break from the challenge for school staff, this is often not the case for the child/young person. Reflection and restoration are still essential to enable the pupil and staff to learn from the situation, to not carry unresolved shame with them, and to remain hopeful for the future.

To achieve this, suspensions are issued with kindness and compassion. At our school we will always explain why the suspension is happening, separate the child/young person from their behaviours and ensure they have a safe adult who provides unconditional positive regard. We also provide hope for their return by planning for their reintegration and providing opportunities for them to share their views.

We refer to the [Education Access Team's Suspension Guidance](#).

Use of exclusion as a consequence

Our school considers the following principles/questions when considering exclusion:

- Is it absolutely necessary to exclude?
- Is it in the best interest of the child/young person?
- Is it in the best interest of the school community?

We also understand that the child/young person will likely remain within the local community. To sustain hope for the child/young person, exclusion is presented as a means of accessing an alternative safe space rather than a threat or punishment.

On the rare occasion that exclusion occurs, our school ensures:

- Positive goodbye with closure for staff, child/young person and their family
- A robust handover between school staff to support the transition to the new school/setting
- Ensuring the child/young person takes all their work with them to share with their new teachers, demonstrating their achievements and what they are proud of
- Restoration opportunities in the new school/setting, repairing the child/young person's relationship with education
- Encouragement to build new positive relationships to ensure a sense of belonging.

There are 15 DfE exclusion codes that can be used to record why a child/young person is excluded:

PP – Physical Assault against a pupil orientation and gender identity	PA – Physical Assault against an adult	VP – Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against a pupil
VA – Verbal abuse/ threatening behaviour against an adult	OW – Use or threat of use of an offensive weapon or prohibited item	BU – Bullying
RA – Racist abuse	LG – Abuse against sexual	DS – Abuse relating to disability
SM – Sexual misconduct	DA – Drug and alcohol related	DM – Damage
TH – Theft	MT – Inappropriate use of social media or online technology	DB – Persistent or general disruptive behaviour

As our school seeks to understand behaviour, we do not exclude for 'Persistent Disruptive Behaviour' as there are 14 alternative which provide a far more meaningful description of behaviours.

We refer to the [Education Access Team's Exclusion Guidance](#).

Harm from dysregulated (stress) behaviour

Our school always prioritises the safety and welfare of all staff and children/young people, recognising that everyone is entitled to a safe and supportive environment. Any incident (verbal or physical) which compromises safety can be perceived as harmful. Our staff understand through training that this behaviour is not necessarily deliberate, rather it is often due to a stress response.

Supporting those who have been harmed

Our staff and children and young people receive the individual support they need in response to any incident where the behaviour has compromised the wellbeing of someone else, causing harm. Occasionally there may be times, despite all reasonably practicable measures being taken, when prevention is unsuccessful, and someone is harmed. At these times our school ensures that this person (adult or child/young person) is fully supported.

We always consider the following:

- are they physically safe and protected?
- do they need immediate first aid & medical treatment?
- is there a need for immediate police involvement?
- ensure they have the opportunity to talk about the incident either with a trusted person or other independent service
- give reassurance to reduce feelings of guilt and/or anxiety

Risk Assessment Process

In our school we use a risk assessment process as the starting point for preventing harm for identified vulnerable children and young people. It identifies what is likely to cause stress to them, using all the information known about them. Once all this information is collated, a strategy for supporting a situation appropriately and keeping everyone safe can be developed. An example of information to be included in the risk assessment can be found in Appendix 5.

Physical intervention (control and restraint) - the use of reasonable force

At our school we make sure we are aware of our duties of care and follow the law. The law states that it is permissible to use reasonable force to prevent children and young people committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, or damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline in the classroom. The latest guidance from the DfE can be found here: [DfE Behaviour in Schools February 2024](#)

The use of physical intervention techniques is only one aspect of co-regulation and is usually the last resort when it is deemed absolutely necessary. It may resolve a short-term situation, but the long-term aim must be to help the child or young person to be able to self-regulate during times of stress.

If such actions are necessary, the actions that we take aim to use the minimum amount of force necessary for the minimum amount of time necessary. Where physical intervention is needed, this is recorded and reported immediately to the head teacher.

Our school follows the **Essex Guidance 'Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - Safe Practice for Schools and Educational Settings (Including the use of restrictive / non-restrictive physical intervention)'**

It can be found here: [Understanding and Supporting Behaviour - Safe Practice for Schools - August 2023.pdf \(essex.gov.uk\)](https://www.essex.gov.uk/understanding-and-supporting-behaviour-safe-practice-for-schools-august-2023)

Within this guidance, it is regarded as best practice to record every incident where the use of restraint has been deemed absolutely necessary and to follow the other recommendations set out in this document. This includes reporting to ECC via MySafety.

The MySafety system is used to record all accidents, violence, work related Ill Health and near misses.

[Click here to log an incident](#) (please use the Access Token: ABC123)

Where it has been deemed necessary to use a restrictive physical intervention, the detail of this should be accurately recorded and the incident communicated to parents. Parents should be informed of the incident initially by phone and it should then be followed up in writing.

Ways to Record Incidents of Concern

We have a clear process and system in place to record incidents that occur. MyConcern, a secure and trusted safeguarding software, is used to record and manage all behaviour incidents and safeguarding concerns. We use the information effectively to enable strategic oversight and to influence and review practice.

Screening and searching children and young people

At our school we are all aware that there are legal provisions which enable school staff to confiscate items from children and young people:

DfE Advice for Schools July 2022 - [Searching, Screening and Confiscation \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/106522/Searching_Screening_and_Confiscation.pdf)

From this guidance our staff understand that they may confiscate items that are of high value, deemed inappropriate and are against the school policies or are causing concern. Where a specific policy about the item does not exist, the teacher should use their discretion about whether the item is returned to the child/young person or to their parent/carer. Items returned to them should usually be returned no later than the end of that school day. If the item needs collecting by a parent/carer, the teacher should ensure that the parent/carer is made aware that an item has been confiscated – either through the child/young person or via text/phone call. Where the item is of high value or deemed inappropriate, contact should be made directly with the parent/carer.

Staff do have the power to search without consent for “prohibited items” including:

- knives and weapons
- alcohol
- illegal drugs
- stolen items
- tobacco and cigarette papers/vapes
- fireworks
- pornographic images

- any article that has been or is likely to be used to commit an offence, cause personal injury or damage to property; and any item banned by the school rules which has been identified in the rules as an item which may be searched for.

How we support children and young people with additional Social, Emotional and Mental Health needs

At our school, we acknowledge that some children and young people will have, at times, additional needs. We recognise that children and young people may experience a range of social, emotional, mental health needs which present themselves in many ways. These may include children and young people displaying challenging, disruptive or stress-related behaviours. These behaviours may also reflect underlying social interaction difficulties, sensory or medical needs or clinically diagnosed needs such as attention deficit disorder, attention deficit hyperactive disorder, foetal alcohol disorder or attachment difficulties.

We will always endeavour to understand behaviour, support emotional wellbeing and make reasonable adjustments to our provision to support progress and engagement using a variety of strategies developed with key adults within the child/young person's life (staff, family, professionals) in order to best meet their needs. In Essex, this is done in the context of One Planning. We also recognise the needs of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and follow the policies and procedures associated with supporting these children and young people, including but not limited to, the SEND Code of Practice, Equal Opportunities and Disability Act.

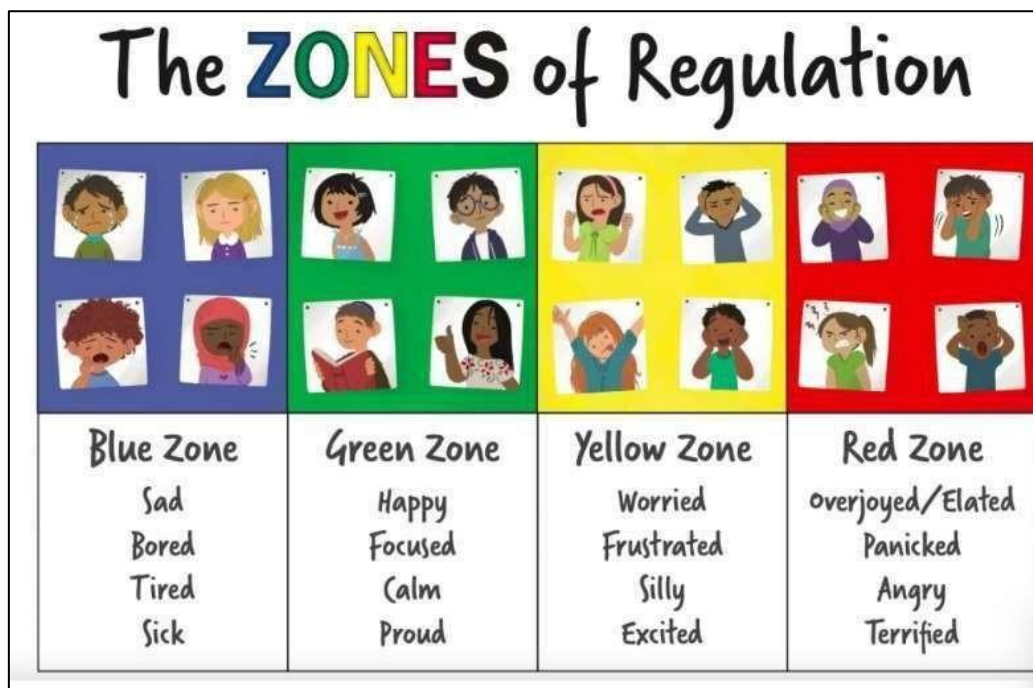
Recognising that 'flexible consistency' allows for personalisation and reasonable adjustments, staff in our school are trusted to integrate between policies which enables staff to seek the views of internal school leads for SEND, Mental Health, Pastoral Support and Safeguarding to ensure that use of all the policies enable a fair and informed decision.

We understand that the communicating behaviour(s) most likely comes from a place of stress which may come from anxiety, fear or as a result of a barrier to learning. We have a duty to strive to help children and young people to return to a place of regulation, within their 'Window of Tolerance', as only then will the child or young person be in a place to learn, connect and thrive.

Ways to Support Understanding

At our school we believe that understanding what the behaviour is communicating to us is the first part for planning a response.

Zones of Regulation is a strategy that we use with children 1:1 or as a whole class. It teaches children about the emotions and how they might feel when experiencing different emotions. Children will choose strategies to draw on, when necessary, for example if they are worried they might count to 10 slowly in their heads or use strategies taught through My Happy Mind programme, such as 'Happy Breathing.' Each class has an interactive display dedicated to the Zones of Regulation which children access each morning and the class teacher responds to according to where their pupils have placed themselves on the grid.



Our Principles - the things we will do as adults

All staff

- Seek to understand the communication behind the behaviour
- Keep the relationship at the forefront when seeking to restore and repair (connection before correction)
- Model compassion and kindness, provide hope and support, connection and belonging
- Understand that any event in a child or young person's life can impact on how they think, feel and act
- Use of logical consequences rather than just simply punishments or sanctions
- Provide routines, set limits and have clear boundaries
- Regulate our own emotions
- Co-regulate with young people and help them to develop self-regulation strategies for the future.

Co-Headteachers

- Leads on all aspects of this policy and model the expectations for all staff
- Ensures that all staff receive regular purposeful training to support relationships and minimise risk
- Ensures that all staff are provided with clear instructions for reporting incidents of harm and that all such reports are thoroughly investigated and responded to
- Ensures that risk assessments are carried out when required and that appropriate measures are implemented
- Is the only person authorised to suspend or exclude a child or young person

Other Senior Leaders

- Lead on all aspects of this policy and model the expectations for all staff
- Ensure the policy is implemented effectively
- Ensure all staff are appropriately trained
- Oversee the specific needs of all children and young people across the school
- Provide support to staff, children/young people and parents/carers as necessary
- Link with outside agencies to access additional services

- Ensure that all tracking and reporting of incidents and additional needs are up to date

Classroom Staff

- Plan the teaching and learning for all children and young people
- Include parents/carers in personalised planning for their child
- Communicate regularly with parents/carers about their child's needs
- Provide specific support for children and young people experiencing any difficulties, whether this is an ongoing need or a short term difficult a child or young person may be having.

Family

- Inform the school of any concerns about changes in their child/young person's behaviour, emotional wellbeing or mental health
- Have open conversations with the school
- Engage with support offered by the school and other agencies to further support their child/young person's needs

Governors/Trustees

- Ensure that appropriate policies are in place, that they are regularly reviewed, and their effectiveness monitored
- Undertake their statutory role around suspension and exclusion
- Ensure that all staff receive purposeful training in order that they can undertake their role

Further Guidance

1. [Keeping children safe in education 2023 \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://publishing.service.gov.uk)
2. [Behaviour in schools guidance Sept 2022](#)
3. [Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention June 2019](#)
4. [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Sept 2022](#)
5. [Searching, Screening and Confiscation July 2022](#)
6. [Positive environments where children can flourish \(2021\)](#)
7. [Creating a Culture: how school leaders can optimise behaviour \(DfE, 2017\)](#)

Notes on the Following Appendices

The following appendices contain ways to help us to understand the behaviour

Your school needs to populate with your own templates for supporting and understanding behaviour. Some examples of helpful templates can be found in the appendices

Appendix 1: A Tool for Understanding and Reframing Behaviour

Appendix 2: Policy for management of bullying

Appendix 1 - A Tool for Understanding and Reframing Behaviour

Describe the behaviour Review and be curious	Reframe the Behaviour from for example: “He’s just lazy” or “She just wants to get attention” to something more helpful. Examples of reframing-	Reflections How is this behaviour understandable? What’s getting in their way/what are the barriers? How can we help?	Adult response What do we need to intentionally teach? Find the barriers and remove them
<p>Be the stress detective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - why and why now? <p>What is the typical adult response?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there an adult response plan? • Is the plan helpful, shared, used and understood? • Is there a personalised stress/distress management plan? <p>Consider the environment</p> <p>Is there adequate differentiation for learning and sensory needs and personal strengths?</p> <p>How are rules shared, talked about and explained?</p>	<p>Avoidant: in ‘fight/flight’ survival mode</p> <p>Defiant: in ‘fight/flight’ survival mode, coping with threat</p> <p>Aggressive(controlling): outside window of tolerance. Dysregulated in the hyperarousal state as a result of becoming distressed. Now in ‘fight’ survival mode, adaptive strategy to manage underlying vulnerability e.g. fears, anxieties, helplessness, confusion, shame, or feeling frightened</p> <p>Attention seeking: attachment/connection needing: they need time and attention for something in that moment (they do not feel safe and secure yet and trying to gain a sense of belonging)</p> <p>Withdrawn: cautious possible indicator of an emerging ‘flight/hypoarousal and or freeze’ response being used to cope with the situation</p> <p>Rude: self-protective: “I need you to know how I feel so I’m going to make you feel like it too so you will help me”, or “I don’t think you like me/don’t care”. In fight mode.</p> <p>Not engaging: doesn’t feel safe yet. possible indicator of an emerging dysregulation response being used to cope with the situation.</p>	<p>The impact of trauma</p> <p>For example-How have any adverse experiences affected their ability to trust, share attention? (confirmed or assumed)</p> <p>Feelings fuelling the behaviour</p> <p>Is the child/young person projecting their feelings onto you? Are you inadvertently re-enacting previous relationships? Are you too distressed by the behaviour to co-regulate?</p> <p>Attachment history- what is their survival strategy?</p> <p>How have earlier experiences shaped the child/young person’s preference for connecting with others? How is this being challenged/affirmed?</p> <p>Social development</p> <p>Can they play with or are they better alongside? Can they share and negotiate? Do they show empathy?</p>	<p>Structure and Predictability</p> <p>Visual routines, preparation for transitions, opportunities for sensory input and relaxation</p> <p>Adapt the learning</p> <p>Small steps, time limited, clear and realistic expectations, choice and use the child/young persons’ strengths</p> <p>Rhythmic/repetitive intervention/support.</p> <p>Relationships with the staff</p> <p>Compassionate and kindness in the greetings, verbal language and body language; genuine empathy for tough times, exploration of feelings, use of regulate/relate/reason. Use PACE.</p> <p>Relationships with peers</p> <p>Role playing and social stories, mentors, clear roles in any group activity, reduce competition, increase play and fun.</p>

Appendix 2: Policy for management of bullying

Bullying is the intention to hurt, frighten or intimidate another person. Bullying can manifest itself in many forms and can be difficult to identify, because serious sustained bullying is very secretive. It is also deliberate and persistent. It is not isolated incidents.

Common forms of bullying:

- **physical intimidation:** pushing, poking, tripping, punching, kicking, hair pulling, pinching
- **verbal intimidation:** name calling, threats of violence
- **social isolation:** no participation in games or friendship groups, no partners in school activities,
- **emotional abuse:** withdrawal of affection, taunting with affections, emotional isolation, “no one loves you” (predominantly family members],
- **abuse of property:** hiding items, destroying items, ‘trashing’ items
- **cyber intimidation:** bullying by e-mail, text, online communication
- **homophobic bullying:** bullying motivated by a prejudice against a person’s sexuality; against a person who may not act like other boys and girls; verbal abuse, e.g. “those trainers are so gay”
- **racial abuse:** verbal abuse, derogatory language, ridicule, threats, stereotyping comments.

Signs that a child is being bullied are:

- withdrawn behaviour
- failure to thrive [academically and socially]
- lack of interest and motivation
- loss of self-confidence
- reluctance to come to school
- unwillingness to go to school [headaches, stomach aches]
- displaying ‘retaliation’ behaviour [adopting ‘bullying’ behaviour but at random]
- attention seeking behaviour as a cry for help

The Trust’s Policy for Behaviour and Discipline states that the iMAT schools aim to provide a structured, stimulating and secure environment where all children feel safe, respected and free to learn.

Bullying will not be tolerated because a child who is being bullied does not feel safe, respected or free to learn. Our schools should take all reported cases of bullying-type behaviour very seriously. All staff must be very vigilant and the Behaviour Team is responsible for all procedures dealing with this.

Pupil voice should be given a very high priority and this is very apparent in all systems and procedures, including those in place for bullying. PSHE lessons for all year groups tackle bullying and children are consulted when formulating an anti-bullying policy.

Procedures used in the management of bullying at Witham Oaks Academy

During Establishment at the beginning of each academic year the procedures for all behaviour issues are explained to the children so they are aware of where to go and who to talk to if they have concerns; this should be reinforced throughout the year. This procedure is revisited and discussed regularly throughout the year with children.

Anti-bullying Champions

We have Anti-Bullying champions at Witham Oaks Academy. These are two adults who are known to the children who they can report incidents of bullying to at any time. These members of staff have undergone additional training so that they are experienced in dealing with and supporting children during such situations.

Children should be taught to understand the definition of bullying and should be taught to understand that it refers to persistent incidents and not one-off friendship disputes.

What is bullying?

Bullying is the **repetitive, intentional hurting** of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an **imbalance of power**. It can happen face to face or online.

At Witham Oaks Academy we use:

- S - Several
- T - Times
- O – On
- P - Purpose

to distinguish between unkind friendship issues or bullying.



‘The Target’

When a child informs us they are experiencing difficulties with a certain child or children:

- He/she talks with an adult experienced in dealing with these difficulties.
- Friends are detailed to ‘keep an eye’ on the him/her, and to ensure they always have someone to play with, sit with at lunchtimes etc.
- An MDA is detailed to monitor him/her, ensuring he/she is safe at all times on the playground at lunchtimes.
- **ALL** staff receive a message, explaining that he/she needs to be monitored for a set period. Any incidents involving him/her will be reported to a member of the Behaviour Team
- Meetings are arranged with his/her parents, where all procedures are explained, anxieties allayed and confidence boosted.
- Parents are given regular updates of developments.

Talk sessions with members of staff

These are vitally important in helping children cope with bullying because they:

- **reassure the child that the bullying WILL stop**
- **show the child that someone will listen and take their problems seriously**
- **allow the child’s fears and frustrations to be expressed in a non-threatening situation.**
- **gives the child increased self-confidence to face the situation**

- **allows the child to talk through the bullying with an experienced member of staff who can offer strategies to make the bullying irrelevant.**

During these sessions the member of staff will work on raising the child's self-esteem by reinforcing their strengths and talents. The taunts and abuse are discussed and the child is made to believe they are irrelevant and must be rejected. It is explained that if the bully sees a 'submissive' reaction to his/her taunts it gives the message that even the 'target' in a way believes the taunts.

Once the 'target' is able to reject them the bully has lost his/her strength and power.

The 'target' is also offered the opportunity to 'face the bully', to express face to face how they feel. [This is very carefully supervised by experienced staff]

'The Perpetrator'

When a child has been identified as a bully:

- he/she will be interviewed by a member of staff, experienced in dealing with this type of behaviour.
- it is possible he/she will be removed from the playground at break and lunchtime until we feel it is safe for him/her to be re-introduced. They will be able to socialise with chosen peers in the Break/Lunchtime Room during this time.
- when re-introduced to the playground, he/she will be monitored for a set period by a designated adult.
- all staff are notified that he/she needs to be carefully monitored for a set period.

his/her parents may be asked to attend a meeting, where all procedures and consequences are explained.

- if deemed necessary, he/she will be delivered to and collected from the school office/class teacher by parents each day.
- he/she will attend a 'face to face' session with the target [at the target's request] to LISTEN to how the victim feels.
- If the 'bullying' has affected a large number of children within a class and there is group responsibility, the 'leader' of the group will be identified and measures taken to stop the bullying. If necessary, the 'leader' may be isolated from the rest of the class for a set period, and the other members of the group given strategies to resist the control.

Interviewing the bully

Bullies are often very unhappy, insecure individuals, who bully others to make themselves feel more powerful. They often choose victims that have abilities or attributes that they would love to have themselves. It is therefore vital to raise the bully's self-esteem so there is no longer the need to bully.

At the interview the bully will:

- be told the bullying WILL stop and procedures and consequences explained.
- discuss the effects of his/her bullying on the victim and ways he/she can help that person feel safe again.
- have a 'face to face' session explained
- be allowed to talk about why he/she feels the need to bully.

Questions will be asked to determine whether the he/she is being bullied inside or outside school. The member of staff will spend time looking at the positive qualities of the bully, and how these can be used in a positive way, [to raise the bully's self-esteem].

Upstanders

At Witham Oaks Academy, children understand we are a zero-tolerance school and they will be proactive in reporting any incidents of bullying on behalf of others. Our anti-bullying policy has been agreed in consultation with the children.