



# QUANTOCK

## EDUCATION TRUST

### **Behaviour and Ethos policy**

LINKS: Suspensions & Exclusion policy, Child Protection & Safeguarding policy, Character Education Policy, Anti Bullying Policy, Complaints Policy

DATE: March 2026

POSTHOLDER RESPONSIBLE: CEO

TRUSTEES/GOVERNORS COMMITTEE: People, Pay & Recruitment

AUDIENCE: All students, parent/carers, staff

STATUS: Ratified

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1. This policy sets out the approach and principles for promoting a culture of positive behaviour across all our schools, supporting and incorporating the vision and values of the Quantock Education Trust (QET) including British values and the Christian values of our church schools.
- 1.2. The Trusts values are:

Uniqueness;	We commit to respecting and protecting the diverse and unique qualities of each individual and of each school in our Trust community, celebrating the similarities and differences between our Church and non-church schools.
Community;	We listen to, influence and play an active role in our communities
Aspiration;	We raise standards and provide opportunity for developing talents in all areas of life
Respect;	We respect and celebrate the value and preciousness of each individual
Equity;	We aim to enrich the unique life opportunities of all, overcoming barriers and achieving goals
- 1.3. It outlines the high behavioural standards the Trust expects from all our pupils, the support and interventions used to address poor behaviour and sets out the sanctions that will follow if this policy is not adhered to. The Trust will also recognise where behaviour is positive. This policy should be read in conjunction with the Trust's Suspensions and Exclusions policy, Anti-bullying policy, SEND policy, Safeguarding and child protection policy and Character Education Policy, all of which can be found on the Trust's website. It will be reviewed annually by the Board of Trustees.
- 1.4. For the purpose of this policy, we use the word 'pupil' to include learners of all ages. It is understood that schools may prefer to refer to 'children' and 'students'.

## 2. Policy scope

- 2.1. Our policy for behaviour and ethos covers the areas of learning, attendance, punctuality and social behaviour.
- 2.2. This policy applies to pupil conduct in and out of school, including school trips and visits.
- 2.3. This policy applies to all schools in our Trust and complements each school's own local policy on Behaviour.
- 2.4. It is the responsibility of all individuals in the Quantock Education Trust (QET) to familiarise themselves with this policy and comply with its provisions.

## 3. Aims and objectives

- 3.1. This policy provides a framework of agreed principles for positive and prosocial behaviour, within which all staff, pupils, parent/carers and carers are able to contribute to the development and maintenance of an effective learning environment, which is calm and

purposeful and where it is a given that teachers can teach and pupils can learn without disruption.

3.2. We are committed to ensuring that all children:

- Feel safe
- Value education and understand its importance in preparing them for their future
- Are aware of the impact of their behaviour on others
- Have a voice which is heard and acknowledged
- Have the opportunity to become leaders
- Have opportunities and are supported and encouraged in developing and demonstrating the QET character attributes
- Want to learn
- Enjoy being in school
- Feel confident
- Care about each other

3.3. By setting high standards of expected behaviour, the Trust and its schools aims to:

- Promote positive relationships that safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils, creating an effective learning environment;
- Maximise the quality of the learning experience for all pupils enabling everyone to learn effectively;
- Enable pupils to understand the implications of their behaviour, to regulate their own behaviour and most importantly to take responsibility for their behaviour;
- Ensure every member of the Trust community feels valued, respected and treated fairly;
- Provide an ethos and environment within which everyone feels safe;
- Foster discipline and mutual respect between pupils and their peers, and between staff and pupils;
- Raise awareness amongst pupils to ensure that their behaviour does not put their peers or staff at an increased risk in respect of health and safety;
- Raise awareness amongst pupils for the need to recognise and manage their emotions and reactions; and
- Support pupils whose behaviour within the school environment is challenging or who may find friendship and co-operation difficult.

3.4. This policy does not prescribe how the principles should be implemented. It is expected that each school will comply with them but that each will be able to apply them using strategies which are best suited to the context of the school. Best practice, which has clear impact will however, be shared and used to inform effective and sustained standards of behaviour across our Trust.

## 4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

4.1. This policy takes its legal framework from the following legislation and statutory guidance:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025
- Equality Act 2010
- Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion guidance August 2024
- Behaviour in Schools (2024)

- Use of Reasonable Force – advice for all School leaders, staff and governing bodies (2013)
- National and Minimum Standards for Boarding Schools (2022)

## 5. Training and Awareness

- 5.1. The QET will ensure that all individuals understand their responsibilities under this policy, by providing appropriate training, education and guidance. The level and nature of the training may vary depending upon the role as relevant to the policy.

## 6. Application of Policy

- 6.1. This policy applies to all members of the Trust community. Each school within the Trust will apply sanctions within this policy for behaviour that takes place inside and outside of school premises, where it is reasonable to do so, for example if allegations of bullying or inappropriate online activity taking place outside of school hours are reported to the school.
- 6.2. When deciding whether it would be reasonable to impose a sanction for poor behaviour outside of the school, staff will consider:
- 6.2.1. whether the pupil is taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity, travelling to or from the school, wearing school uniform or is in some other way identifiable as a pupil at the school at the time of the poor behaviour; and/or
- 6.2.2. the severity of the misbehaviour, whether the pupil's behaviour could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school, and whether the behaviour poses a threat to another pupil or member of the public or could adversely affect the reputation of the school and/or Trust.

## 7. Roles and responsibilities

All members of the Trust community are expected to follow this policy and treat one another with dignity, kindness and respect. Roles, responsibilities and expectations of each section of the Trust community are set out in detail below.

- 7.1. Board of Trustees
- 7.1.1. The Trustees will work with the Central Team and each respective school Senior Leadership Team and their Local Governing Committees to oversee the ethos and core values that promote high standards of expected behaviour from pupils attending its schools. Trustees will monitor and evaluate the impact of the policy and will hold the CEO and Headteachers to account for its implementation. Trustees will ensure that they and local governors regularly receive relevant training on suspensions, exclusions, behaviour and discipline.
- 7.2. The Chief Executive Officer
- 7.2.1. The CEO will ensure that this Behaviour Policy is applied consistently across schools within the Trust and will report back to the Trustees on educational outcomes, behaviour management, support strategies and early intervention for pupils requiring additional support via the Ethos and Education Committee. They will ensure that senior staff receive

regular continued professional development and receive regular training on behaviour management.

### 7.3. Local Governance Committee

7.3.1. Local governors in each school will review and monitor the application and implementation of this policy by receiving regular reports from the school Headteacher on behavioural sanctions and support put in place for pupils at the respective school. Local governors will scrutinise relevant data, review relevant suspension and exclusion decisions and act as a point of challenge for decisions taken by the Headteacher.

### 7.4. Headteacher

7.4.1. Each school Headteacher, with support from their respective Senior Leadership Team, will ensure that staff are supported and up to date with policy changes. They will ensure that lessons are well led and effectively managed and that staff regularly and effectively self-evaluate their behaviour management strategies. The Headteacher will monitor how staff implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied fairly and consistently, searches are carried out lawfully and the use of removal from the classroom is used appropriately and not having a disproportionate effect on pupils sharing particular protected characteristics. The Headteacher will act as a source of support and guidance for staff on behaviour management strategies and discipline.

### 7.5. Staff

#### 7.5.1. All staff will:

- Ensure that the Trust's expectations are transparent to all pupils and parent/carers, and that expectations of, and responses to, behaviour are consistent, fair, proportionate, and predictable.
- Apply this policy fairly, consistently, proportionately, and without discrimination, taking into account SEND as well as the additional challenges that some vulnerable pupils may face;
- Make reasonable adjustments for disabled pupils as required;
- Promote a teaching and learning ethos which encourages all pupils to attend and participate in lessons whatever their level of ability or need;
- Model positive behaviour;
- Not tolerate disruption to teaching, learning or school routines and take proportionate action to restore acceptable standards of behaviour;
- Challenge pupils to meet the school expectations and maintain the boundaries of acceptable conduct;
- Record incidents of poor behaviour and any given sanctions in the pupil's behavioural log or behaviour system/log used by the school;
- Provide praise, rewards and reinforce positive behaviour;
- Deal with incidents of bullying, discrimination, aggression and derogatory language quickly and effectively;
- Focus on de-escalation and preventative strategies rather than being solely reactive;
- Consider the welfare of the whole Trust community and ensure that the majority of pupils' education is not jeopardised by the disruptive behaviour of a minority of pupils;
- Contribute to the development of systems which support and reinforce positive behaviour;

- Recognise that there may be contributory factors which affect pupil's behaviour and respond according to individual need;
- Identify pupils who are experiencing difficulties in developing or sustaining appropriate behaviour and put in place general and targeted interventions to improve pupil behaviour and provide support. This could include:
  - More frequent engagement with parent/carers;
  - Home visits;
  - Mentoring and coaching;
  - Report cards;
  - Time in school-based support provision
  - Engaging with local partners and agencies to address specific challenges;
  - Consideration of whether a multi-agency assessment such [as early help or Education Health and Care Plan] is required
  - Designing an Individual Behaviour Plan and/or Pastoral Support Plan and/or Individual Provision Maps with set targets and support strategies embedded within;
- Contact parent/carers if there is a problem with attendance, punctuality or equipment and about any concerns or problems that affect their child's work or behaviour;
- Set, mark and monitor homework and provide facilities for children to do homework in the school if required;
- Send parent/carers an annual written report on their child's progress and arrange Parent/carers' Evenings during which progress will be discussed; and
- Engage with and attend all training and development sessions to continually improve behaviour management and learn from best practice.

## 7.6. Parent/Carers

### 7.6.1. Parent/carers play an important role in ensuring good behaviour from their children. Parent/carers are expected to:

- Support the school in the application of this policy;
- Inform the school of any challenging behaviour exhibited at home, special education needs or changes in circumstances that may account for changes in their child's behaviour;
- Ensure their child attends the school on time, appropriately dressed, fed, rested, and equipped;
- Work with the school in support of their child's learning;
- Attend virtual or in person meetings at the school with staff to discuss their child's Behaviour and adhere to any parenting contracts put in place;
- Inform the school in writing of any medication their child needs to take support their child in homework and other opportunities for home learning;
- Attend Parent/carers' Evenings and discussions about their child's progress, if reasonably possible;
- And in the case of suspension, provide appropriate supervision for their child during the first 5 days of suspension, ensure that their child is not present in a public place during school hours without reasonable justification and, if invited, attend a reintegration interview at the school with their child.

## 7.7. Pupils

Reminders of the school rules and expected standards of behaviour are up on walls in classrooms and situated around the school, as well as being regularly reinforced in assemblies and in lessons.

## 8. Principles

- 8.1. At the heart of our Trust policy are the key elements of relationships and pupil wellbeing, both underpinned by a culture of high expectation and clear boundaries. Relationships and the promotion of wellbeing are essential in creating a culture where each child feels safe, valued and has a sense of belonging – these relationships should be nurtured through a combination of warmth, kindness and assertiveness. It is important that these relationships enable each child to thrive as a young person and not just a learner, as reflected in the QET policy for Character Education.
- 8.2. The culture of positive and prosocial behaviour must be threaded through all aspects of a child's experience and promoted constantly as 'this is how we do things around here'. With the result that the impact is seen, heard and felt by all visitors and members of the school community. It is important that the maintenance of this culture is a constant focus even when the perception is that there are no major concerns.
- 8.3. Clear expectations of behaviour should be conveyed and implemented consistently including reference to preferred attributes, choices and potential consequences. The overriding and non-negotiable expectation is that all pupils must be polite, respectful and responsible at all times.
- 8.4. It is essential that colleagues foster a strong work ethic and sense of pride in achievement and that pupils understand the significance of their behaviour in contributing to academic success, a fulfilling working future, active citizenship, happiness and a sense of wellbeing.
- 8.5. Teachers are expected to set and maintain consistent routine and expectations throughout their practice to enhance and facilitate cognitive learning.
- 8.6. Rewards:
  - 8.6.1. Each school is able to establish its own approach to recording rewards and sanctions in line with the principles contained in this policy and subject to regular monitoring and evaluation.
  - 8.6.2. Rewards provide public recognition of pupils' achievement and progress (including personal development) and help to raise pupils' motivation and expectations
  - 8.6.3. The simplest rewards include
    - Verbal praise
    - Written commendation
    - Display of work
- 8.7. Sanctions for pupils:
  - 8.7.1. Sanctions should be used to help pupils make appropriate choices about their behaviour. Where they choose to breach the Code of Conduct, pupils have a right to expect fair sanctions, applied consistently.

- 8.7.2. The most appropriate sanction is one designed to put matters right and to encourage better behaviour in future. It is not appropriate, therefore, to punish whole groups for the misdemeanours of a few, or to impose a sanction that may humiliate pupils.
- 8.7.3. Where pupils make inappropriate choices about their behaviour and formal sanctions are necessary, the responsible adult who observes the behaviour should initially deal with the matter. In the case of serious misbehaviour, the pupil may be referred to more senior colleagues.
- 8.7.4. The particular level of sanction will depend on the severity and regularity of the behaviour and will be proportionate in the circumstances. A response to behaviour may have various purposes including deterrence, protection and/or improvement. The school uses a range of sanctions in response to incidents of poor behaviour.
- 8.7.5. Each school is able to develop its own procedure for rewards and sanctions may include:
- Verbal reprimand;
  - Requiring a written apology;
  - Confiscation of a pupil's property if it in some way constitutes a breach;
  - Missing break time;
  - Extra work or repeating unsatisfactory work until it meets the required standard;
  - Loss of privileges
  - Removal from a class or groups;
  - Internal exclusion;
  - Detention including during lunch time, after normal school hours and at weekends;
  - Regular reporting including early morning reporting; scheduled uniform and other behaviour checks; or being placed "on report" for behaviour monitoring;
  - Education off-site for a designated period;
  - Suspension or permanent exclusion as a last resort
- 8.7.6. There should be clear expectations and standards set for attendance and punctuality, underpinned by a robust pastoral approach to support and intervention as necessary.
- 8.7.7. Implementation of this policy must reflect the Trust commitment to an inclusive culture in which 'everyone matters', in which difference is embraced and there is tolerance and empathy towards those who are experiencing difficulty (learning, social or emotional or medical) and in which there is a clear zero tolerance of bullying. Each school is expected to set up its 'cultural markers' or opportunities for conveying its expectations regarding the promotion of positive and prosocial behaviour including assemblies, displays, transactions, uniform, lunchtime norms and availability of stationery and equipment.
- 8.7.8. Senior leaders, teachers and support staff must have a good understanding of the triggers for poor behaviour and of the range of interventions and sources of support for encouraging pupils to maintain and exceed expected standards of behaviour and where necessary modify their behaviour as appropriate.
- 8.7.9. Schools are expected to adapt and use their premises as appropriate to create an environment which promotes support for behaviour and mental wellbeing providing space and time for reflections, mindfulness, 'cooling off', counselling and internal exclusion.
- 8.7.10. Schools are responsible for logging and tracking incidents of positive and negative behaviour, collating evidence and communicating with parent/carers using software and technology

which are time efficient in terms of staff workload and effective for the purpose of monitoring and evaluation.

- 8.7.11. School staff aim to work in cooperation with parent/carers to understand the reasons behind their child's behaviour and put in place a clear support strategy for modifying and addressing that behaviour. This might include the designated safeguarding lead making enquiries into circumstances outside of the school and/or having a targeted discussion with the pupil, including explaining what they did wrong, the impact of their actions, how they can do better in the future and what will happen if their behaviour fails to improve. The Trust recognises the importance of effective home-school communication and will endeavour to communicate with parent/carers, and the Virtual School Head for looked after children, regarding pupils' behaviour when necessary. When a sanction is imposed, parent/carers will be informed in writing.
- 8.7.12. The school encourages restorative justice and pupils are encouraged to apologise to their peer group and/or to staff for rudeness or a lack of respect.
- 8.7.13. The school will also consider whether the behaviour under review gives cause to suspect that a child is suffering, or is likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, staff will follow the school's safeguarding policy. They will also consider whether continuing disruptive behaviour might be the result of unmet educational or other needs. If staff reasonably believe this to be the case they will consider whether a multi-agency assessment is necessary.
- 8.7.14. Under no circumstances will illegal or inappropriate items be tolerated in the school, and all pupils will respect and look after the school premises and environment. The following behaviour is regarded as completely unacceptable and will result in disciplinary actions and possibly in suspension or exclusion, depending on the circumstances:
- Verbal abuse to staff and others;
  - Verbal abuse to pupils;
  - Physical abuse to/attack on staff;
  - Physical abuse to/attack on pupils;
  - Any form of bullying (to the extent not covered above);
  - Indecent behaviour;
  - Damage to property;
  - Gambling on school property;
  - Recording or taking images of pupils or staff without their express consent, including the creation of fake images using artificial intelligence (AI);
  - Consuming, carrying, supplying or misusing of illegal drugs and alcohol and other substances including "legal highs";
  - Carrying, supplying or taking prescription drugs or non-prescription drugs without lawful reason;
  - Theft;
  - Serious actual or threatened violence against another pupil or a member of staff;
  - Sexual abuse or assault;
  - Carrying an offensive weapon;
  - Arson;
  - Unacceptable behaviour which has previously been reported and for which school sanctions and other interventions have not been successful in modifying the pupil's behaviour;
  - Malicious allegations against staff;

- Racist, sexist, homophobic or other forms of discriminatory behaviour;
- Persistent truancy/lateness;
- Possession of items prohibited under the school rules.

8.7.15. Removal from the classroom for more than a short period will occur in response to serious misbehaviour, only when necessary and for as long as is necessary, and once other behavioural strategies in the classroom have been attempted, unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal. Reasons for removal are:

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

During the period of removal the pupil will receive continual, supervised education in a suitable environment. Staff will consider whether any assessment of underlying factors of disruptive behaviour is needed. Parent/carers should be informed on the same day if their child has been removed from the classroom and a reintegration strategy will be discussed with the pupil and parent/carers which facilitates reflection by the pupil, sets out any support to be put in place for the pupil to avoid such behaviour in the future, sets out clear behavioural expectations and the consequences of failing to comply.

8.8. Detentions:

Staff will only issue detentions within or outside of school hours when it is reasonable after having considered whether:

- The detention may put the pupil at increased risk or compromise their safety;
- The pupil has known caring responsibilities or religious requirements;
- The detention timing conflicts with a medical appointment;
- Parent/carers ought to be informed of the detention; and
- Whether suitable travel arrangements can reasonably be made by the parent for the pupil, disregarding any inconvenience for the parent.

8.9. Permanent exclusion will only be used as a sanction of last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of this behaviour policy and when allowing the pupil to remain in the school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school. The school will follow the Trust's Exclusions Policy and the DfE statutory guidance on suspensions and exclusions when taking a decision to suspend or exclude

8.10. Routines become social norms:

8.10.1. Routines in school are also a crucial part of warm ethos. Schools have clear routines for the following outlined in their appendix:

- Entry to and exit from lessons
- Movement around corridors
- Entry to and exit from assembly
- Dining hall routines

8.11. Contact with parent/carers:

- 8.11.1. Contact with parent/carers is very important – all parent/carers want to support the schools in providing the best education for their child, schools will work hard to gain their trust through including them and being transparent. It is important to maintain regular contact with parent/carers not just for relating to poor behaviour and more importantly to acknowledge extra effort or improvement in progress, behaviour, attendance, punctuality. This could be a regular activity such as ‘phone call Friday’.
- 8.11.2. Senior leaders are expected to establish, promote and maintain the Trust policy values and ethos for behaviour in their school by setting the tone, modelling the behaviour, being highly visible and delivering a unified message ‘this is how we do things here’.

## 9 Pupils with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities

- 9.1. In the context of this policy, a child is considered to have SEND if he or she:
- has difficulties in learning which are significantly greater than the majority of other pupils of the same age; or
  - has a disability which prevents or limits them from accessing the curriculum; or
  - has behavioural, emotional or social difficulties which impact adversely on their learning and progress.
- 9.2. The Trust is aware that continuous disruptive behaviour can be a result of unmet needs. If such needs are identified, the respective school will do all it can to ensure that the pupil receives appropriate support.
- 9.3. The Trust is conscious of its legal duties under the Equality Act 2010 in respect of pupils with disabilities and will make reasonable adjustments to this policy to avoid any substantial disadvantage that a pupil may face as a consequence of their additional need. A reasonable adjustment that may be made would be to impose a more lenient sanction for a pupil whose behaviour is in consequence of their need than would be imposed for a pupil exhibiting the same behaviour who does not have that additional need. The Trust will not assume that because a pupil has SEND, it must have affected their behaviour on a particular occasion – this is a question of judgement for the respective school on the facts of the situation.
- 9.4. An Individual Behaviour Plan and/or Pastoral Support Plan and/or Individual Provision Maps will be used for children with SEND whose condition causes them to display challenging behaviour and advice will be sought from external agencies where necessary to assist with putting in place appropriate support strategies, which will be monitored and reviewed.
- 9.5. The respective school will as far as possible, anticipate likely triggers of misbehaviour for pupils identified as having SEND and will put in place support to prevent these. Examples of preventative measures include (but are not limited to):
- Short, planned movement breaks for a pupil whose SEND means that they find it difficult to sit still for long;
  - Adjusting seating plans to allow a pupil with visual or hearing impairment to sit in sight of the teacher;
  - Adjusting uniform requirements for a pupil with sensory issues or who has severe eczema;
  - Training for staff in understanding conditions such as autism.

- 9.6. Staff training will include matters such as how certain special educational needs, disabilities, or mental health needs may at times affect a pupil's behaviour. Where relevant, engagement with experts, such as Educational Psychologists and other support staff such as counsellors and Mental Health Support Teams, can help to inform effective implementation of this policy.

## 10. Investigating Incidents

- 10.1. Initial investigations of minor infractions of the policy may be carried out by a member of staff/teacher on their own. Further investigations or initial investigations of more serious offences may be carried out by two staff together. Pupils who have witnessed the behaviour will be asked to provide written, signed and dated statements. Any questions raised by staff will be open and non-leading. If the police wish to question the pupil, the school will ensure that a responsible adult is present at all times and will inform the pupil's parent/carers of what has happened as soon as possible.
- 10.2. The Trust uses Close Circuit Television ("CCTV") within its some of its premises. One reason why the Trust uses CCTV is to provide a safe and secure environment for pupils, staff and visitors. If behavioural incidents are recorded on CCTV the footage may be viewed as part of the investigation and the content considered before imposing a sanction.
- 10.3. When more than one pupil is involved in an incident and the interpretations of an event differ, then every effort will be made to try to find the truth. If this still remains unclear, then the staff members involved will use their professional judgement to come to a conclusion on the balance of probabilities.
- 10.4. In exceptional circumstances, pupils may receive a suspension pending an investigation if there is a possibility that the welfare of other pupils may be compromised by that pupil remaining in the school.

## 11. Search, seizure and confiscation

- 11.1. If an investigation or an allegation leads to reasonable suspicion and the search of a pupil's clothes, bags and lockers is deemed appropriate, a search may be carried out by each school Headteacher or staff authorised by them. Staff will follow the latest DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation when conducting a search. Staff will take into consideration the age and needs of pupils being searched or screened. This includes the individual needs or learning difficulties of pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN) and making reasonable adjustments that may be required where a pupil has a disability.
- 11.2. Each school Headteacher will oversee the practice of searching to ensure that a culture of safe, proportionate and appropriate searching is maintained, which safeguards the welfare of all pupils and staff with support from the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy). Each school Headteacher will ensure that a sufficient number of staff are appropriately trained in how to lawfully and safely search a pupil who is not co-operating, so that these trained staff can support and advise other members of staff if this situation arises.
- 11.3. Staff may confiscate or seize items in the possession of pupils that pose a risk to staff or pupils, are illegal or banned by the school rules or is evidence in relation to an offence and may confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a disciplinary sanction so long as it is reasonable in the circumstances. Confiscation of a pupil's property will be proportionate and aimed at maintaining an environment conducive to learning and one which safeguards

the rights of other pupils to be educated. Where appropriate a member of staff may retain or dispose of a pupil's property as a punishment and are protected from liability for damage to, or loss of, any confiscated items. Guidance on what to do with particular confiscated items can be found in the latest DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

- 11.4. A teacher or someone who has lawful control of the child can search a pupil **with their consent** to look for any item banned by the school rules. Pupils must be first asked to empty pockets and bags themselves. Before any search takes place, the member of staff conducting the search should explain to the pupil why they are being searched, how and where the search is going to take place and give them the opportunity to ask any questions. If the pupil refuses to give permission the school may impose a sanction for failing to follow a reasonable instruction.
- 11.5. Each school Headteacher and other members of staff authorised by them have the power to search a pupil **without the pupil's consent** if they suspect they are in possession of 'prohibited items'. The designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) should be informed of any searching incidents where the member of staff had reasonable grounds to suspect a pupil was in possession of a prohibited item or if they believe that a search has revealed a safeguarding risk without delay. Prohibited items that can be searched for without consent include:
- Knives or weapons;
  - Alcohol;
  - Illegal drugs;
  - Stolen items;
  - E-cigarettes, tobacco and cigarette papers;
  - Fireworks;
  - Pornographic images; or
  - Articles that the member of staff reasonably suspects have been or could be used to commit an offence or cause personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person (including the pupil).

A member of staff can use reasonable force to search for any prohibited items but not to search for items which are identified only in the respective school rules. Before using reasonable force the member of staff should consider whether conducting the search will prevent the pupil harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder.

- 11.6. Any search without consent must be conducted by a member of staff of the same sex as the pupil in the presence of another member of staff. A member of staff can only carry out a search of a pupil of the opposite sex and/or without a witness present, where the member of staff reasonably believes that there is a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if they do not conduct the search immediately and where it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff.
- 11.7. When conducting a search pupils must not be required to remove any clothing other than outer clothing. 'Outer clothing's defined as any item of clothing that is not worn wholly next to the skin or immediately over a garment that is being worn as underwear, as well as hats, shoes, boots or scarves).
- 11.8. Strip searches (a search involving the removal of more than outer clothing) on school premises can only be carried out by police officers under the Police and Criminal Evidence

Act 1984 (PACE) Codes A and B. While the decision to undertake the strip search itself and its conduct are police matters, school staff retain a duty of care to the pupil(s) involved and should advocate for pupil wellbeing at all times. Before calling police into the school, staff should assess and balance the risk of a potential strip search on the pupil's mental and physical wellbeing and the risk of not recovering the suspected item. Staff should consider whether introducing the potential for a strip search through police involvement is absolutely necessary by consulting with the designated safeguarding lead and school Headteacher, and should always ensure that other appropriate, less invasive approaches have been exhausted. Unless there is an immediate risk of harm and where reasonably possible, staff should inform a parent of the pupil suspected of concealing an item in advance of the search, even if the parent is not acting as the appropriate adult.

11.9. Staff should keep a record of any searches conducted on pupils and inform parent/carers that a search has been carried out as soon as reasonably practicable. Records should include:

- The date, time and location of the search;
- Which pupil was searched;
- Who conducted the search and any other adults or pupils present;
- What was being searched for;
- The reason for searching;
- What items, if any, were found; and
- What follow-up action was taken as a consequence of the search.

11.10. Staff may seize an electronic device to examine any data or files on the device if they think there is good reason to do so. These data or files may be erased before returning the item if they believe there is good reason to do this. If the member of staff conducting the search suspects they may find an indecent image of a child, the member of staff should never intentionally view the image, and must never copy, print, share, store or save such images. When an incident might involve an indecent image of a child and/or video, the member of staff should confiscate the device, avoid looking at the device and refer the incident to the designated safeguarding lead. Staff will have regard to the UK Council for Internet Safety advice for managing incidences of sharing nudes and semi-nudes when managing these issues.

## 12. Restrictive interventions including use of reasonable force

12.1. The Trust strives to provide a safe learning environment for all pupils. All members of staff (and anyone whom the Headteacher has given the responsibility to be in charge or in control of the pupils) are lawfully permitted to use reasonable force to prevent pupils committing an offence, injuring themselves or others, damaging property, and to maintain good order and discipline.

12.2. This power extends to times when staff are lawfully in charge of pupils but are off the school premises e.g. on a school trip. There is no definition of when it is reasonable to use force and every situation will have to be judged by the person in charge at that time.

12.3. There are circumstances when it is appropriate for staff to have physical contact with pupils which does not constitute the use of reasonable force or other restrictive interventions.

Examples include:

- Giving first aid.
  - Guiding or escorting pupils, such as holding the hand of a pupil when walking around the school or on a school trip.
  - Comforting a distressed pupil.
  - Congratulating or praising a pupil, for example a pat on the back or a handshake.
  - Demonstrating how to use a musical instrument.
  - Demonstrating exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching.
- 12.4. Staff may in limited circumstances need to use restraint, which is a non-disciplinary intervention which immobilises a student or limits their movement, and this may or may not include direct physical contact. This can include holding a pupil's body or depriving them of an aid usually used to help them move. This will be avoided where at all possible.
- 12.5. Staff will only use seclusion – a non-disciplinary intervention to keep a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving – as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high level of emotional or behavioural dysregulation. Staff will seek to ensure that the place of seclusion is not threatening or intimidating. The pupil must be supervised at all times during the period of seclusion. As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil must be allowed to leave. Reasonable force does not have to be used for an intervention to be seclusion. Seclusion includes:
- Physically obstructing the pupil's way of leaving the place,
  - Securing the place so that the pupil cannot leave it, or
  - Causing the pupil to believe that they will be punished if they leave the place
- 12.6. Whenever any restrictive intervention is used, including reasonable force, staff will consider the following:
- Necessity – taking into account whether there is a less restrictive way to achieve the same thing, the risks involved, whether it may escalate and communicating, where possible, with other staff
  - Proportionality – using the least amount of force, potential alternative strategies and the personal circumstances of the pupil including any relevant protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
  - The pupil's welfare – including that pupil's context and circumstances, overall welfare, the importance of their dignity, the need to communicate with them about the decisions being taken, any EAL, and how the pupil is feeling.
- 12.7. Use of reasonable force and restrictive interventions will generally be rare and may need to be determined by staff in the moment in many cases.
- 12.8. Consideration will also always be given to the rights of the pupil concerned, including under the Equality Act 2010 and the Human Rights Act 1998. The Trust recognises that some pupils with SEND may react to distressing or confusing situations by displaying behaviours which may be harmful to themselves and others. Triggers may include pain, sensory overload, unfamiliar situations or environments, or feelings of fear and anxiety. Pupils who are non-verbal or find verbal communication challenging may express their needs, discomfort or confusion through actions. The Trust/school will seek to understand the underlying triggers

of challenging behaviour to provide proactive support, create an inclusive environment, and utilise staff who know individual pupils well to help identify and manage risk, such as trigger points when challenging behaviour is more likely to occur. Parent/carers should consult the school's SEND policy that sets out the provision for SEND pupils and the school's approach generally, but in the context of restrictive interventions this might include:

- Pupil behaviour plan and/or pastoral support plan and/or individual provision maps.
- Risk assessments.
- Specific adjustments for that pupil that are known to reduce the need for restrictive interventions.
- Distracting techniques.

12.9. The school will minimise the need to use restrictive interventions through prevention and de-escalation measures, employing specific whole-school measures as well as tailored approaches for individual pupils.

12.10. Whole-school measures include:

- Consideration of how the school and classroom environment can support all pupils to achieve and thrive.
- Sharing best practice for whole-class behaviour management, and for managing communal spaces such as corridors and playgrounds.
- Training staff in effective communication strategies, such as using appropriate tone of voice and empathy to aid de-escalation.
- Development of working staff-pupil relationships and trust.
- Recording and analysing data on the use of restrictive interventions to inform improvement planning.

12.11. Individual approaches could include:

- Working closely with parent/carers to support individual pupils
- Implementing strategies to support individual pupils based on their identified needs, including the development of [behaviour plans and/or pastoral support plan and/or individual provision maps]. Where a pupil has a disability, the school has a legal obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to support pupils with reasonable adjustments, making sure they can benefit from what the school offers
- Giving pupils time, space and strategies to calm down before their behaviour escalates

12.12. Every significant incident in which reasonable force is used will be recorded by staff members, as required by s.93A of the Education and Inspections Act 2006. This requirement only applies where it is a significant incident, so will not include cases where physical contact is made for other reasons, such as giving first aid. This recording will take place as soon as practicable after the event and should be done by the member of staff the same day as the incident. This following information must be recorded in the school's safeguarding system:

- Names of pupils and staff directly involved.

- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code.
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- A brief account of the incident, including what led up to the incident, identified or potential triggers if known, any preventative or de-escalation strategies used, and (where relevant) what type of reasonable force was applied, the degree of force, and details of any physical injuries sustained.
- A brief account of why the use of force was assessed as necessary in that instance.
- Any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.
- The pupil's account of what happened, as well as any witness accounts.

12.13. A report will also be made to parent/carers where there is a significant use of force, apart from where:

- The pupil is 20 or over at the time; or
- It appears to the staff member that doing so would be likely to result in serious harm to the pupil. In this instance, the staff member will report the incident to any parent/carer(s) who it can be reported to without resulting in significant harm or, if there are none, to the local authority within whose area the pupil is ordinarily resident.

12.14. A report of the incident made to parent/carers will include the following details as a minimum:

- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- Brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance.
- Brief account of what type of force was applied, and the degree of force.
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.

12.15. Every incident which results in seclusion or restraint, which may not include reasonable force, must be recorded on the school's safeguarding system. Incidents must be recorded as soon as possible and no later than the same day, in writing. The information recorded must include:

- Names of pupil and staff directly involved.
- Time, date, location and approximate duration of the intervention.
- Any relevant needs or circumstances of the pupil, including whether the pupil involved has an identified special educational need or disability and their SEN status code.
- A brief account of why the intervention was assessed as necessary in that instance.
- Details of any physical injuries sustained, if applicable.
- Any post-incident support, such as details of any medical treatment for injuries or other adverse impacts.

12.16. Apart from in the circumstances as set out in 11.13, a report must be made to parent/carers where a pupil is subject to seclusion, restraint or immobilisation, even if that is included

within a pupil's behaviour plan and/or pastoral support plan and/or individual provision maps. Staff will endeavour to do this the same day, but this may also involve a subsequent follow up discussion with parent/carers to include any de-escalation strategies and what can be done differently in future.

- 12.17. Where an incident resulted in both a significant use of force as well as seclusion/restraint, only the procedure set out at 11.12-11.14 will be used, with parent/carers not needing to be informed twice.
- 12.18. The school will evaluate all incidents involving the use of restrictive interventions as soon as practicable after the event to understand why it was used, the impact on pupils and staff, any patterns and trends, and how the use of restrictive interventions might be avoided in future.
- 12.19. Where appropriate, the pupil and staff member involved will receive a medical assessment and treatment for any injuries as soon as possible. Any injuries will be recorded in accordance with the school's procedures and reported as appropriate to the Health and Safety Executive.
- 12.20. Staff who are likely to need to use reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions will be adequately trained in its safe and lawful use and in preventative strategies. The school will carry out risk assessments to ensure that staff who regularly work alongside pupils where the use of reasonable force and/or other restrictive interventions may be required can do so as safely as possible, in accordance with the school's duties under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.
- 12.21. The Trust will ensure that the data around the use of force and restrictive interventions is considered by school leaders to ensure there is not a disproportionate use of force in the school, to identify learning and patterns. and to make improvements to policies and practices.

## 13. Bullying

- 13.1. The Trust will take all reasonable measures to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all pupils and staff and this includes protection from bullying. The Trust has a separate Anti-Bullying Policy which should be read in conjunction with this policy. Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power. This can include emotional, physical, racial, sexual, verbal (direct or indirect) and cyber-bullying.
- 13.2. The Trust wants to make sure that all pupils feel safe in the schools and are accepted into the Trust community. The Trust's ethos is one of inclusion and equality; bullying of any kind is regarded as a serious breach of this behaviour policy and will not be tolerated.
- 13.3. Bullying can be verbal or physical, by person or by electronic, on-line or written means and can be directed at both staff and pupils. The Trust practices a preventative strategy to reduce the chances of bullying, and the Trust's anti-bullying strategy is instilled in the Trust's curriculum, through the active development of pupils' social, emotional and behavioural skills, assemblies and is embedded in daily school life. It is made very clear to pupils what is expected of them in terms of respecting their peers, members of the public, and staff, and any intentional breach of this will result in disciplinary action.

13.4. If an allegation of bullying does come up, the respective school will:

- Take it seriously;
- Investigate as quickly as possible to establish the facts;
- Record and report the incident; depending on how serious the case is, it may be reported to the Headteacher;
- Provide support and reassurance to the victim;
- Make it clear to the perpetrator that this behaviour will not be tolerated. If there is a group of people involved, they will be spoken to individually and as a whole group. It is important that children who have harmed another, either physically or emotionally, redress their actions, and staff will make sure that they understand what they have done and the impact of their actions;
- Discuss the matter with both parties, bring them together and insist on the perpetrator seeing the other person's point of view; sometimes the no blame approach is used, sometimes negotiation and sometimes sanctions;
- Ensure that if a sanction is used, it will correlate to the seriousness of the incident and the 'perpetrator' will be told why it is being used;
- Consider whether suspension or exclusion is appropriate in light of the circumstances.

13.5. The Trust believes pupils should be able to enjoy using social media in a safe environment but recognises that there are inherent threats in using social media which could harm the welfare of pupils and staff at its schools. Where a member of staff has reasonable grounds to suspect that a pupil is using social media in an inappropriate way, which could cause harm to another person in the Trust community, the member of staff should report this to a member of the school's Senior Leadership Team. Following any such report an investigation will follow during which an authorised member of staff may ask that the pupil gives them access to their social media account. In the event that the pupil refuses to cooperate and will not give access to an authorised member of staff during an investigation this could lead to an adverse decision taken against the pupil.

## 14. Child-on-Child Abuse

14.1. Sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. The Trust will act swiftly in response to instances of alleged child-on-child abuse and will follow its safeguarding policy, Keeping Children Safe statutory guidance and the DfE guidance on sexual violence and harassment between children. Risk assessments will be carried out and measures put in place while investigations into any reports continue. Support will be provided to the reported victim and abuser. The outcome of the investigation may lead to sanctions being imposed in accordance with the terms of this policy.

## 15. Complaints

15.1. If parent/carers have any concerns or complaints over the application or implementation of this policy they should raise their concerns with a staff member or the Headteacher in accordance with the Trust's complaints policy. If the concern relates to a suspension or exclusion, the statutory procedure set out in the exclusions guidance will be followed.

## 16. Suspensions (see separate Trust policy for Suspensions and Exclusions)

16.1. Schools will commit to considering the following before excluding:

- Parent/carers have been included in the decision-making process – (parent/carers may not always agree but sharing the school’s reasons for making the decision is a courtesy which parent/carers should be able to expect).
- Any safeguarding concerns which mean that schools may need to consider alternatives to exclusion, e.g. the school cannot be confident that someone will be at home to support/supervise the pupil during the day.
- Does the pupil have any SEN needs which need to be met to ensure that they are able to engage fully with school life? This may not eradicate the consequence but may involve work from SENDCo alongside to ensure that support is in place.
- Occasionally schools may need to negotiate the day of the exclusion with parent/carers to ensure that supervision is appropriate and that parent/carers are able to actively support the school in the consequence. This is particularly the case for younger pupils. Schools can isolate the child in the meantime if required. This does not undermine the consequence but ensures that relationships with families are maintained.

16.2. If a pupil is excluded, it means that they must be supervised at home for the period of time determined by the Headteacher. Only the Headteacher has the power to exclude a child (or deputy in absence) and this decision must be made following a full investigation.

## 17. Permanent exclusion

17.1. This is a last resort for any school but there are occasions where this may be in the best interests of the pupil and/or for the wider school body. The Trust supports its Headteachers and Local Governance Committees in making such decisions, and to protect all staff we share the burden of such decision-making at Trust level. Any school considering permanent exclusion should immediately contact the CEO for advice on next steps.

17.2. In cases of very serious incidents where a permanent exclusion is a possible outcome, this should be declared immediately - advice should be sought for how to educate the child whilst any investigation is underway.

17.3. The Headteacher should, as far as possible, avoid permanently excluding any pupil with an EHC Plan or a looked after child.

## Appendix 1 - Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Example of form which may be used to record Search, Screening and Confiscation

*Note: Schools may have their own way of recording this data*

Searching, Screening and Confiscation should always be witnessed by another member of staff

Date	Pupil Name	Staff Name 1 & 2	Search Location

Searchable items:

- Knives/weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco/cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article used to commit an offence
- Any article used to cause personal injury/damage to property
- Any item identified in the school rules as a banned item that can be searched for.

RISK ASSESSMENT		
	YES	NO
Has the pupil given consent?		
Has the search been agreed by the Head of School/Headteacher?		
Is there a member of staff as a witness to the search?		
Are the members of staff the same sex as the pupil?		
Have parent/carers been informed?		
SEARCH EXPECTATIONS		
<p>If 'No' to the above, a search can still take place if the member of staff has reasonable grounds that the pupil is in possession of a banned item and there is a risk of serious harm if the search is not conducted immediately and where it is not reasonably practical to summon another member of staff.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Only outer clothing can be requested to be removed during a search e.g. coats/blazers/shoes</li> <li>• 'Possessions' includes any item the pupil has or appears to have control of e.g. pockets/bags/desks/lockers Members of staff can confiscate, retain or dispose of the searchable items list, where reasonable to do so</li> <li>• Any weapons, stolen items or controlled drugs should be delivered to the Police immediately.</li> <li>• Pornographic images should be deleted/disposed of unless the Police confirms it constitutes a specific offence</li> <li>• Any items that are evidence of an offence should be delivered to the Police immediately</li> <li>• The member of staff may examine the data/files on an electronic device if they have good reason to do so (e.g. cause harm)</li> <li>• Ensure parent/carers has been informed of search in a timely manner</li> </ul>		

NOTES OF SEARCH	
OUTCOME	
Staff Signature:	Staff Signature:

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