BEHAVIOUR POLICY SEPTEMBER 2026

See Governors' Statement of Behaviour and Discipline

SCHOOL EXPECTATIONS

School leaders take seriously their duty of care towards pupils, employees and visitors to the school. Staff protection is an important part of child protection; both depend on confident and competent staff who feel supported by the management. This policy has a clear focus.

- The first and paramount consideration is the welfare of the children in our care.
- The second is the welfare and protection of the adults who look after them.

RESPECT CODE

We expect all stakeholders to follow the RESPECT code:

R – Respect everyone

E – Encourage each other

S – Speak truthfully

P – Practise, persevere, make progress

E – Embrace mistakes

C – Consider choices

T – Thrive together as a team

INTRODUCTION

Most children are anxious to please and to do well in school, and they normally respond to adults who are caring and consistent in their approach. Some children, however, may have serious problems to cope with and are consequently unable to settle into the school situation easily. They will need patience, support, and above all consistent treatment from the adults they meet in school. By responding calmly instead of reacting, we support children and help restore a positive atmosphere and relationships.

Although class teachers, as the people who have the closest relationship with children, should be informed when a child's behaviour is disruptive or aggressive, it is the responsibility of every adult to encourage children to behave with consideration for other people. If class teachers have concerns about the behaviour of a particular child, they should tell the co-head teacher at the first opportunity, who may think it necessary to arrange a meeting with parents. In some cases, social services; family early help; the educational psychologist or other outside agencies may be involved.

CHILDREN'S BEHAVIOUR POLICY

Most children respond happily to the warm supportive school ethos. Most visitors to the school are very complimentary about the quality of relationships throughout the whole school community.

AIMS

We aim to develop children who

1. Have fulfilled their potential, both academically and socially.

2. Have positive self-esteem.

3. Show respect for their peers and their opinions, work, attitudes, beliefs, and cultures, regardless of their race, sex, class and any disabilities.

4. Show respect for people in authority, linked to an understanding of the need for rules, and a willingness to abide by and accept these rules and act on them.

5. Can express themselves through language, movement, music, creative activities and imaginative play.

6. Show respect for both the school's and individual's property.

7. Have a positive attitude towards tasks and have established good levels of motivation and pride in the quality of their work.

8. Have a feeling of community spirit within the school, showing loyalty, care and the ability to share and co-operate.

9. Can operate independently, according to a learned set of rules.

THE CONTEXT

As a staff, we need to consider the following factors when considering how we deal with children who are finding the school situation difficult.

WHOLE SCHOOL APPROACH

The children, staff and the senior leadership team all need to know what is **expected** from them. Children need to follow the school rules. Teachers and support staff need to be **consistent**, both in their classroom and throughout the school in following the stages. The senior leadership team need to **support** staff.

SUPERVISION

Children should be supervised at all times. It is the responsibility of the class teacher during session times and support staff at break times and lunch times on and off site.

A POSITIVE APPROACH

We need to encourage models of good behaviour, which means adopting a positive approach and where possible not drawing attention to negative aspects of social behaviour. We expect all staff members to follow the PIP and RIP approach when supporting children:

P Praise

I In

P Public

R Reprimand

I In

P Private

Research shows that in the typical classroom, there is far more comment on bad behaviour and negative aspects of work than on good behaviour and work. It has also been suggested that praise, which is couched in general terms, without giving feedback which focuses the child's attention on what was good and so helps him or her to develop further, is not useful. There will obviously be times when it is impossible to give a positive response, but we have to guard against unhelpful criticism. We will always focus on the primary behaviour not the subsequent behaviour displayed by the child (secondary behaviour).

We recognise that all behaviour is a form of communication and as part of our behaviour approach , we use the zones of regulation to support pupils in recognising their emotions, understanding how feelings influence behaviour and developing strategies to regulate their responses and actions appropriately.

SUITABLE WORK

Questions of discipline cannot be seen in isolation from the child's total learning experiences in the classroom and the school as a whole. Research suggests that when children are engaged in tasks which extend their thinking while not being outside their intellectual capabilities, there is less incidence of disruptive behaviour. We must constantly look at the match between the children and the work they are set, so they are neither occupied in trivial activities nor trying to cope with tasks which are too difficult. When children have low self-esteem, which can result from under-achievement in school, they are more likely to reject school completely and become disruptive. The question of appropriate curriculum is fundamental.

MORAL EDUCATION

It is important for us to consider the area of moral education in school. This again involves self- respect, but in addition, it also involves questions of the rights of others and responsibilities towards them. For example, a problem we constantly face is that of helping children to sort out differences by means other

than fighting. In addition, many parents tell children that they should hit back if another child upsets them. We have to have consistent standards of behaviour in school that the whole community understands and accepts.

CLASSROOM ORGANISATION

It is important to look at classroom organisation and to make sure that children do not have to move around unnecessarily, have everything they need and are not being interrupted by other children looking for materials and equipment. When classrooms are well organised, there is less pressure on teachers, as children can find things immediately in the area where they are going to use them without needing to ask for help.

BOUNDARIES

Children need to feel secure and they need clear behavioural boundaries. When boundaries are overstepped they need to be told firmly that their behaviour is unacceptable. Children who are not contained may become very insecure and involved in ever more outrageous behaviour in order to make adults respond.

It is every adult's duty to challenge if a pupil is overstepping boundaries. This can be minor (not wearing the correct uniform often; wearing jewellery; wearing hats in class) to more significant (not keeping themselves or others safe). For younger pupils, please challenge this with parents. For older pupils, ask questions around this. In both circumstances, there may be a need for the child we have not yet identified.

PUPIL VOICE

Children need to develop confidence and the knowledge that they will be listened to.

We need to use every opportunity to build on children's ideas and to help them to carry them through effectively.

We need to always listen to the children, even when we think we know what is/has happened.

CONSENT

Children will be given the opportunity to explore and understand the key concepts of consent within friendships, drawing on realistic but non-threatening scenarios where they can understand their rights, rehearse strategies for seeking, giving and not giving consent, and evaluate situations in which behaviours are appropriate or inappropriate. Equipping the children with these essential skills and strategies will help them know that their voice and choices matter as well as learn to respect the choices of others.

SCHOOL RULES

1. Do my best at all times.
2. Respect myself, each other and the school environment.
3. Be kind, keep myself and others safe.

4. Be on time in the correct uniform and ready to learn.

5. Complete my homework and read at home

REWARDS / SANCTIONS

Each child starts every day on GREEN (Stage 1) and it is up to them to stay there by following the rules and doing the right thing. Children can move between the 3 stages – GREEN, AMBER and RED. This gives the children the opportunity to turn their behaviour around and end the day on GREEN.

Dojos should be given throughout the day for good behaviour, effort, manners and contributing to lessons (5 per day). These are recorded on the Dojos platform. Each child will be given their individual avatar. When the child reaches 100 Dojos, they receive a good news text and the avatar changes colour to show the next level. The child will also receive a purple slip to take home. A class display will be used in each classroom to celebrate and track children's positive behaviour choices and progress." All children start with the red avatar, then orange, yellow, green, blue, pink, violet, silver, gold and platinum. This is a total of 1000 Dojos each year. These can be saved and exchanged in the reward shop. They can be carried over throughout the year. The number of Dojos collected will be rounded down to the nearest 100 to be exchanged. No more than 5 Dojos should be given a day. **It is expected that all children who have not ended the day on red will gain their 5 Dojos.**

Children will also be awarded up to 25 Dojos for completing their homework projects. This is in addition to their 5 daily Dojos.

The number of Dojos awarded daily will be affected if a child is placed on red. If so, they will only receive a maximum of 3 Dojos.

Make sure you are consistent and follow the policy.

It is there to support you and also allows the Leadership Team to gather evidence on a child's behaviour over time.

STAGE 1 - GREEN

Every child starts every day on Green.

STAGE 2 - AMBER – WARNING

Give the child a warning explaining clearly which rule has been broken and how. As their behaviour improves they should be moved back to Green. An emphasis should be placed on the AMBER stage as a reflective opportunity and should be taken as seriously as a red status by the children and adults. Adults should be actively looking for signs of improvement in the child's behaviour so they can be placed back on green.

STAGE 3 - RED – LEADERSHIP TEAM

If a child's behaviour does not improve they will be placed on RED. The adult must complete a red slip, including the date and time.

At Robert Browning:

The child will then complete a reflection sheet in class. Call Maureen who will come and discuss the incident with the child who will then resume their learning promptly.

At Tower Bridge:

The child will then complete a reflection sheet in class or in the office if at playtime. Call Laura who will come and discuss the incident with the child who will then resume their learning promptly. Red slip must be completed by adult.

At Snowsfields:

The child will then complete a reflection sheet in the office. Zohra will discuss the incident with the child who will then resume their learning promptly.

Parents will be informed by text. **If a child who is placed on red refuses to leave the classroom, a member of the Leadership Team must be contacted immediately.**

This procedure should be followed immediately when the child is on red – do not wait until after lunch/break for the incident to be dealt with.

A Pastoral Support Programme/Report Card System may be set up for those children who receive frequent reds. Parents will attend a meeting with a member of the Leadership Team, Learning Mentor and Class Teacher to set targets which will be reviewed every 2-4 weeks.

Suspensions will only be used as a last resort following a serious breach of the Behaviour Policy, where a pupil's behaviour places themselves or others at risk, or where there is persistent breaking of the school rules despite support and intervention. Before making a decision, the Headteacher will consider the individual circumstances of the incident, including any safeguarding concerns, SEND needs and support already in place. Following a suspension, parents will be invited to attend a reintegration meeting to discuss support and next steps. In exceptional circumstances, a pupil may be separated from others for safeguarding reasons while concerns are investigated. This is a safeguarding measure and not a suspension or exclusion.

The behaviour policy is shared with the parents at the start of each academic year and parents are invited to meet their child's new teacher who will explain the school's behaviour expectations. During enrolments and the Pupil Review meetings class teachers, Learning mentors and members of the leadership team go through the behaviour procedures with the parents. Parents are expected to read the behaviour policy annually, which is available on the Federation' website. Reminders are included on our school's newsletters.

Pupil Development Centre (PDC) Protocol

Children can be sent to the PDC for a range of reasons:

- Timetabled intervention for extreme behaviour
- Preventative intervention for identified children to avoid behaviour escalating
- Daily referral following an incident - RED

- Playtime referral
- Following a suspension
- For an internal suspension

Children cannot be sent for the following:

- Not completing homework or reading journal
- Not finishing work during lesson time
- Missing playtime without following procedures

The decision is made by the Leadership Team if a child is to go to the PDC. If a child refuses to go to the PDC you need to:

- Use the child's reward system – now and next
- Ensure the Leadership Team are informed immediately
- Request help from the nearest adult if needed
- Try to prevent the child entering their classroom (it is more difficult to get them out again)

We do not accept any form of aggression towards staff or other pupils in the PDC. If a child becomes aggressive in the PDC you need to:

- Inform the Leadership Team immediately. A fixed term suspension may follow.
- Try to defuse the situation or distract the child.
- Do not try to remove the child from the room. Try to contain the situation.
- Other children may need to be removed.
- The child may need to be restrained as a last resort. This must only be done by trained staff.

IN THE PLAYGROUND AND OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM

We encourage children to engage in a wide range of play activities in an attempt to provide an alternative to fighting games, which often lead to real fights.

Play equipment is in the playground for all pupils to play with at all times in the playground (outside of Daily Mile).

Staff in the playground must support positive play by modelling, observing and engaging with pupils in play.

At lunch times there are always at least 2 adults in the playground, depending on the number of children present, and during playtimes there are at least 3 adults on duty. Adults on duty should, as much as possible, involve the children in games. The equipment in the playground is for all children to share each playtime and to reduce negative behaviour incidents.

If a child approaches any adult with a problem concerning another child, the adult should immediately help the child to sort it out by reminding them of the HIGH FIVE STEPS. We must help children to find peaceful solutions. Children need a lot of help and encouragement to do this. Adults should keep an open mind and investigate and question ALL the children involved with the incident before sending a child on red.

If a child is on red during a school trip, they should be referred to the leadership team on return to school. A decision will be made then about whether they should attend the next trip and this MUST be communicated to the parents. This includes residential trips.

If a child displays inappropriate behaviour off school premises and is witnessed by a member of staff or reported to the school by a member of the public, the behaviour policy will be followed and sanctions put in place once the child has returned to school. Parents will be invited to attend a meeting where the incident and any ensuing sanctions will be discussed.

A lunch club is run each day; which children have to attend if their behaviour in the playground continues to cause concern. Suspensions may follow **any fighting, bullying or incident involving racist, homophobic or sexist behaviour should be reported immediately to the Leadership Team as this will not be tolerated.**

BEHAVIOUR AT CLUBS

If a child is not following the rules in a club, they are told clearly by the club leader that they are receiving a warning and then the club leader informs the parent. When a child receives a second warning they can no longer attend the club. Club leaders must be consistent and not tolerate inappropriate behaviour. Club leaders must let the office and the Leadership Team know of any warnings given and why so this can be recorded. Club leaders must supervise their children at all times. Club leaders must arrange a meeting point and then supervise the children (including changing into PE kit if needed). **The Leadership Team must be informed by the club leader.**

BEHAVIOUR AT BREAKFAST CLUB

The breakfast club leaders are expected to follow the school's behaviour policy. If children are placed on Red they should be sent to the office where they would fill in a reflection sheet and discuss their behaviour with a member of the leadership team. A text will be sent to inform the parents.

ONLINE BEHAVIOUR

Even though the online space differs in many ways, we expect our pupils to follow the same standards of behaviour as they do offline. For example, everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. When dealing with inappropriate online behaviour e.g. cyber bullying, use of abusive language or sharing or soliciting improper material, the school will ensure that such incidents are addressed and dealt with following the same principles as offline behaviour. The designated safeguarding lead will be immediately notified of any online incidents that might raise some safeguarding concerns.

ANTI-BULLYING STATEMENT

We are committed to providing a caring, friendly and safe environment for all of our pupils so they can learn in a relaxed and secure atmosphere. Bullying of any kind is unacceptable at our school. If bullying does occur, all pupils should be able to tell and know that incidents will be dealt with promptly and effectively. **We are a *TELLING* school.** This means that *anyone* who knows that bullying is happening is expected to tell the staff. As a school we take bullying seriously. Pupils and parents should be assured that they will be supported when bullying is reported. Bullying will not be tolerated. Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be a victim of bullying. Everybody has the right to be treated with respect.

WHAT IS BULLYING?

Bullying is intentional, hurtful, repetitive, power imbalance. Bullying results in pain and distress to the victim. Bullying can be:

- Emotional - being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting (e.g. hiding books, threatening gestures)
- Physical - pushing, kicking, hitting, punching or any use of violence
- Racist - racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
- Sexual - unwanted physical contact or sexually abusive comments
- Homophobic - because of, or focussing on the issue of sexuality
- Verbal - name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
- Cyber - All areas of internet, such as email & internet chat room misuse
  Mobile threats by text messaging & calls
  Misuse of associated technology , i.e. camera &video facilities

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that he or she is being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and that they should investigate if a child:

- is frightened of walking to or from school
- doesn't want to go on the school / public bus
- begs to be driven to school
- changes their usual routine
- is unwilling to go to school (school phobic)
- begins to truant
- becomes withdrawn anxious, or lacking in confidence
- starts stammering
- attempts or threatens suicide or runs away
- cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- feels ill in the morning

- begins to do poorly in school work
- comes home with clothes torn or books damaged
- has possessions which are damaged or " go missing"
- asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- has dinner or other monies continually "lost"
- has unexplained cuts or bruises
- comes home starving (money / lunch has been stolen)
- becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- is bullying other children or siblings
- stops eating
- is frightened to say what's wrong
- gives improbable excuses for any of the above
- is afraid to use the internet or mobile phone
- is nervous & jumpy when a cyber message is received

These signs and behaviours could indicate other problems, but bullying should be considered a possibility and should be investigated

PROCEDURES

1. Report bullying incidents to staff
2. The incidents will be recorded by staff
3. Parents should be informed and will be asked to come in to a meeting to discuss the problem
4. The bullying behaviour or threats of bullying must be investigated and the bullying stopped quickly
5. An attempt will be made to help the bully (bullies) change their behaviour
6. The bully (bullies) may be asked to genuinely apologise. Other consequences may take place.
7. In serious cases suspension will be considered
8. If necessary and appropriate, police will be consulted
9. After the incident / incidents have been investigated and dealt with, each case will be monitored to ensure repeated bullying does not take place.
10. All children involved will work with the Learning Mentor

If an adult notices or is told of unacceptable behaviour, he or she should encourage the child to use the "High 5" approach and do the following:

1. Ignore
2. Talk friendly
3. Walk away
4. Talk firmly
5. Report

The adult will then:

1. Talk to the children concerned
2. Send the child to the office (if incident takes place in the playground) – procedures for red are then followed
3. Leadership Team will inform the teaching team of any follow up decisions

LEARNING MENTOR

The Learning Mentor will work with children, parents and class teacher to set targets and develop strategies to improve behaviour. Children receive support both in the classroom and in small groups. The mentor will set up an individual programme of support and meets regularly with everyone involved. The Learning Mentors also do preventative work on bullying including circle times and discussions.

INCLUSION TEAM

The Inclusion Team may work with parents and children to help establish more positive approaches to school life and help children with difficulties to develop a better understanding of why certain behaviour is unacceptable in school.

POSITIVE HANDLING

This guidance is designed to ensure that any use of physical intervention by staff is reasonable, proportionate, and necessary, in line with the principles of positive handling, Team Teach strategies, and the Department for Education's statutory guidance (April 2026). Staff are expected to prioritise preventative strategies at all times, using de-escalation techniques and the Team Teach approach, which places 95% emphasis on positive behaviour support before any physical intervention is considered.

At the Bridges Federation, staff are expected to manage behaviour using preventative and de-escalation strategies in line with Team Teach guidance and statutory requirements. Physical intervention should only ever be used when it is reasonable, proportionate, and necessary to prevent harm. **Staff must also consider whether the intervention is in the best interests of the pupil and others, and ensure that any force used is the minimum required and applied for the shortest possible time.**

If a situation escalates and there is a risk of harm to the child, other pupils, or staff, every effort should be made to call for assistance. Where possible, staff should seek support from a member of the Leadership Team or a colleague who is trained in Team Teach.

Any use of physical intervention must be recorded by the staff member involved on the same day, using the appropriate Positive Handling Incident Form. The Leadership Team will review each incident to ensure the response was appropriate. Parents or carers will be informed via text and offered a meeting to discuss the incident.

Challenging behaviour is also recorded using **ABC (Antecedent, Behaviour, Consequence) charts**, which help to identify patterns and triggers. Whenever an ABC chart is completed, the Leadership Team must be informed and a text will be sent to notify the parents.

After any incident, children will be supported with a calm, restorative debrief, focusing on reflection and repairing relationships, in line with our positive behaviour approach.

A review will take place to identify any patterns, triggers, or adjustments required to support the pupil, including updates to risk assessments or behaviour support plans.

POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR SUPPORT

All physical interventions at the Bridges Federation are used within a clear framework of **positive behaviour management**. Our approach is rooted in prevention, with staff trained to recognise **early warning signs** of distress or escalation. As part of our risk reduction strategy, we encourage staff to be aware of any known **triggers or factors that may contribute to challenging behaviour**, and to communicate these within the team to ensure consistent and supportive responses.

Staff are expected to use **de-escalation techniques** and positive behaviour strategies to redirect behaviour before it reaches crisis point. However, if a situation escalates despite these preventative measures, staff have a duty of care to **support all pupils, including the child in crisis**, and to **manage incidents safely and appropriately**, using physical intervention only when absolutely necessary to prevent harm.

TRAINING – TEAM TEACH

All staff who may be required to use positive handling are trained in line with the Team Teach approach, which promotes safe, respectful, and least-restrictive practices. Any staff member authorised by the Head Teacher to use planned physical interventions must complete formal training delivered by Team Teach-certified instructors.

Team Teach training is fully accredited by the Restraint Reduction Network (RRN) and delivered in line with the latest Department for Education and Department of Health guidance. All courses meet national standards for reducing the use of restraint and prioritising positive behavioural support. Training is always led by qualified instructors following robust safeguarding and ethical standards.

Staff working directly with pupils are trained in both preventative and responsive strategies. These skills are designed to complement whole-school behaviour management approaches, ensuring staff are equipped to manage behaviour safely and positively.

Once trained, staff are expected to refresh and practise their skills regularly, in line with Team Teach's emphasis on ongoing skill development. Any concerns or questions about positive handling should be raised with the Leadership Team. More information about the Team Teach approach is available in the school's documentation and via the Team Teach website at www.teamteach.co.uk.

ALTERNATIVES TO PHYSICAL CONTROLS

A member of staff who chooses not to use physical intervention to manage behaviour can often take effective steps to **reduce risk without any physical contact**. A range of **non-physical strategies**, consistent with Team Teach's emphasis on de-escalation, can be used to manage and de-escalate challenging situations safely.

Staff can reduce risk by:

- **Demonstrating care and concern** through calm presence, acknowledging distress, and encouraging positive alternatives using negotiation, choices, and reasoned discussion.
- Giving **clear, simple instructions** for pupils to stop unsafe or disruptive behaviour.
- **Reminding pupils of agreed rules, expectations, and likely outcomes**, helping them to make positive choices.
- **Reducing audience pressure** by moving pupils away from peers or relocating vulnerable pupils to a quieter, safer space.
- **Creating a safer environment** by adjusting the space, such as moving objects or furniture to prevent harm or the risk of items being used dangerously.
- **Communicating with colleagues**, ensuring help is requested early and key staff are aware of the situation.

APPROPRIATE PHYSICAL CONTACT

At the Bridges Federation, we do not operate a 'no contact' approach. Appropriate physical contact may be used where it is reasonable, proportionate, and in the pupil's best interests. This includes minimal, non-restrictive touch to guide, reassure, or support pupils, particularly those with SEND.

This approach is aligned with Team Teach, which promotes supportive, non-restrictive contact and prioritises de-escalation and safety.

WELL CHOSEN WORDS

Well-chosen words can significantly reduce the risk of escalation. During moments of anger or distress, engaging in arguments, raising voices, or making accusations can increase agitation. Directives such as "calm down" or immediately pointing out faults are often counter-productive.

The primary aim when speaking to a dysregulated pupil is to reduce escalation, not to challenge or confront. It is often more effective to pause, stay calm, and select words thoughtfully, using low-arousal communication. In some situations, silence and non-verbal cues can be more effective than verbal responses. Staff are encouraged to take their time, speak softly and clearly, and focus on defusing the situation rather than reacting emotionally.

ABC CHARTS

Sometimes a child's behaviour requires more in depth monitoring to determine the triggers which can affect negative outcomes. Using an ABC chart when behaviour escalates can support improving this. ABC forms should only be used after discussion with the Leadership Team.

When completing an ABC form you must always remember to:

- Complete as soon as you can after the behaviour
- Describe what happened factually (not what you think happened) eg. "pupil sat on floor and laid down while kicking out" rather than "X had a tantrum"
- Consider the changes in the environment and location
- Reflect on your own actions as much as you can – did something get better or worse after you said/did something
- Discuss the incident and go through the completed form with a member of the leadership team after the incident

See below for further guidance on challenging and escalating behaviour.

MODIFICATIONS TO ENVIRONMENT

Positive environmental planning is a key preventative strategy for reducing incidents of distressed behaviour. Staff are expected to consider the environment as part of their **ongoing dynamic risk assessment**, ensuring that classroom spaces actively promote calmness, predictability, and emotional regulation.

Maintaining a **clutter-free and low-arousal environment** helps to minimise sensory overload and reduce behavioural triggers. To achieve this, staff should regularly review their classrooms and shared areas, considering the following:

- **Safe storage** of sharp or pointed objects such as pens, scissors, or compasses, ensuring these are only accessible when appropriate.

- **Limiting access** to small, loose items that could be used as projectiles during moments of distress.

- **Reducing risks** from larger objects or furniture that could potentially be used to cause harm.

- **Checking for hazards**, such as sharp edges or blocked pathways, that could create additional risks during incidents.

- **Reviewing classroom layout** to ensure it is supportive for all pupils, especially those with identified behavioural needs, allowing for calm movement and safe exit routes where necessary.

In addition to removing hazards, staff should consider how the environment can actively **support self-regulation**. Creating **calm, low-stimulation areas** within classrooms or nearby will provide pupils with a safe, supportive space where they can take time out voluntarily before behaviours escalate.

These safe spaces:

- Should be designed for **calm reflection**, not punishment or isolation.

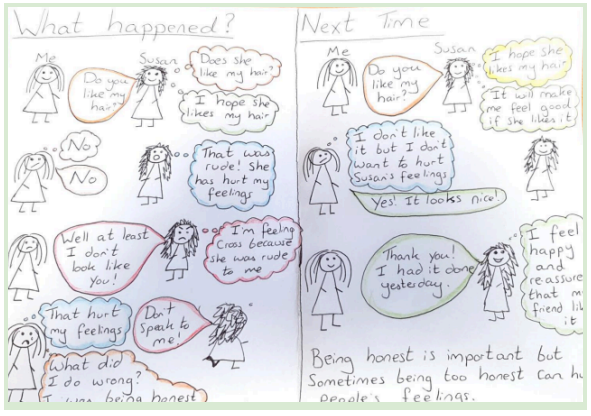
- Can include **comfortable seating** or sensory aids to support regulation.

- Are supported by clear protocols to encourage **positive withdrawal**, helping pupils recognise when they need a break and take responsibility for self-regulation.

Environmental adjustments should be reviewed **regularly**, particularly after incidents, to identify whether changes to the physical space could further reduce risks and better meet pupil needs.

COMIC STRIP CONVERSATIONS

Following an incident, when the pupils are calm, LT or another member of staff will work with the pupil to discuss the incident and what happened through a comic strip conversation. It is through this that a discussion can take place about the thoughts and feelings of everyone involved (staff included) to understand how best to deal with the situation should it happen again.



HELP PROTOCOLS

The expectation at this school is that all staff should support one another. This means that staff always offer help and always accept it. Help does not always mean taking over. It may mean just staying around, Staff are expected to **support one another proactively and consistently** when managing behaviour. This includes both **offering and accepting help** in a professional and constructive way, recognising that effective teamwork plays a vital role in creating a safe and supportive environment for everyone.

Help does not always mean taking control of a situation. It can include:

- **Remaining nearby** to offer a calm presence and emotional support.
- **Calling for additional assistance** when appropriate.
- **Supervising another group of pupils** to allow colleagues to focus on a pupil in distress.
- **Providing backup assistance**, including managing the environment or supporting de-escalation conversations.

Supporting a colleague also involves acting as a **reflective partner**. While empathy is important, **real support may mean acting as a critical friend**, offering constructive feedback after incidents and encouraging colleagues to reflect on alternative strategies.

By following these protocols, staff contribute to a consistent, safe, and supportive culture where the **focus remains on de-escalation, dignity, and pupil wellbeing**.

THE LAST RESORT PRINCIPAL

At the Bridges Federation, physical intervention will **only be used as a last resort**, when there is **no safer or realistic alternative** to prevent serious harm. This approach aligns with national guidance, which emphasises that while staff are not expected to exhaust every strategy in a fixed sequence, they also must not delay action until danger becomes imminent, thus reducing the chance of safe and effective management.

'REDUCING RISK IN PHYSICAL INTERVENTION' - DfE **December 2024** confirms that staff "have the authority to take immediate action to prevent harm occurring even if the harm is expected to happen some time in the predictable future"

This guidance reinforces that staff:

- Should **continuously assess risk**, considering the pupil, environment, and potential consequences.
- Must **choose the least restrictive option** most likely to protect everyone involved.

- Are encouraged to **think creatively about non-physical alternatives**, such as environmental adjustments or self-regulation zones.

- Should always **prioritise the safety, dignity, and wellbeing** of pupils and staff, reserving physical intervention for situations with no viable alternative.

By following this framework, staff ensure that physical intervention remains **exceptional**, guided by **professional judgment**, current legal expectations, and safeguarding responsibilities.

PROACTIVE PHYSICAL INTERVENTIONS

In some cases, it is reasonable to use pre-agreed physical interventions to prevent behaviour from escalating to dangerous levels. Such interventions must be clearly outlined in the pupil's Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) agreed by staff, parents, and, where appropriate, the pupil.

This approach applies when a pupil displays predictable behaviour patterns which, if unmanaged, lead to distress or unsafe behaviours. It may be safer to guide the pupil to a safer space at the early signs of escalation rather than wait for a full crisis.

Planned interventions must always:

- Be in the child's best interests, promoting safety and dignity.

- Reduce risk, rather than increase it.

- Be time-limited and regularly reviewed as part of individual behaviour planning.

Following Team Teach guidance, these interventions are used alongside preventative strategies, ensuring physical intervention remains exceptional and carefully managed.

REASONABLE AND PROPORTIONATE

Any response to extreme behaviour should be reasonable and proportionate. People should not react in anger. If they feel they are becoming angry they should consider withdrawing to allow someone else to deal with the situation. Where staff act in good faith, and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

When physical controls are considered, staff should think about the answers to the following questions:

- How is this in the best interest of the pupil?
- Why is a less intrusive intervention not preferable?
- Why do we have to act now?

- Why am I the best person to be doing this?
- Why is this absolutely necessary?

If staff can answer these questions it is more likely that a physical intervention will be judged to be reasonable and proportionate.

UNREASONABLE USE OF FORCE

The use of physical force must always be proportionate, necessary, and used solely to prevent harm. It is never acceptable to use force simply to gain compliance when there is no immediate or foreseeable risk. Physical intervention must not be used as a method of punishment, coercion, or to assert authority in non-risk situations.

Staff must never:

- Use more force than necessary to reduce risk.
- Inflict pain deliberately, or use techniques intended to cause harm.
- Subject pupils to undignified or humiliating treatment at any time.

In line with DfE guidance (April 2026), staff must not use any technique that restricts a pupil's airway, breathing or circulation. This includes applying pressure to the neck, chest, or abdomen, or any hold that may impact breathing.

The use of force on the ground must be avoided wherever possible and, where unavoidable to prevent immediate harm, must be reduced or ended at the earliest opportunity.

Team Teach recognises that some minimal discomfort may be unavoidable during safe disengagement techniques, for example when releasing from bites or grabs, but deliberate infliction of pain is strictly prohibited.

Additionally, seclusion—where a pupil is forced to remain in a room alone and unable to leave—is not permitted except in an emergency to prevent harm, and even then, only for the shortest time possible. Seclusion must never be used as a planned response, as it is only lawful when authorised by a court order.

All staff are expected to uphold these standards to protect the dignity, rights, and wellbeing of pupils at all times, consistent with both Team Teach guidance and statutory safeguarding responsibilities.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Managing dangerous behaviour is a critical health and safety responsibility. Just as unsafe equipment poses a risk, dangerous pupil behaviour must be addressed with equal seriousness to protect both pupils and staff. Where there is a significant risk of injury, incidents must be reported to the school's designated Health and Safety Lead in accordance with school procedures.

All staff share a collective duty of care to identify and assess risks where they arise, communicate potential risks clearly to relevant colleagues, and take reasonable steps to reduce risks using preventative strategies wherever possible. While risks can be reduced, it is recognised that not all risks can be eliminated. Despite best efforts, challenging situations may still arise, and staff may face difficult decisions. In these instances, it is important to weigh up the risks and likely outcomes and choose the course of action that poses the least risk to pupils and staff.

To comply with health and safety legislation, staff are expected to be familiar with the school's Positive Handling Policy, behaviour management procedures, and risk assessment processes. They must cooperate fully with health and safety requirements, including participating in training when directed to do so. Positive handling training includes essential non-physical strategies, which are relevant to all staff, regardless of their involvement in physical interventions.

When considering a pupil's behaviour, staff should regularly reflect on the following:

- Can we anticipate a health and safety risk related to this pupil's behaviour?
- Do we have all the information required to conduct a proper risk assessment?
- Have we created a written Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) where necessary?
- What further preventative steps can we take to reduce the likelihood of dangerous behaviour developing?

SEARCH AND SCREEN

In accordance with section 89 Education and Inspections Act 2006, the school may search a pupil if there are reasonable grounds that a pupil has brought in a prohibited item.
Prohibited items include:

- knives or weapons;
- alcohol;
- illegal drugs;
- stolen items;
- tobacco and cigarette papers;
- fireworks;
- pornographic images;
- any article that a member of staff reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence or cause personal injury to, or damage to property of, any person (including the pupil.
- any item which a school policy specifies as banned and able to be searched for.

School Staff, with the approval of the Leadership team can search pupils with their consent for any item. The consent does not have to be in writing. *If a member of staff suspects that a pupil has a prohibited item and the pupil refuses to agree to be searched then the school can follow the appropriate procedures in accordance with the school behaviour policy.* See **https://childlawadvice.org.uk/information-pages/school-powers-to-search-and-screen-pupils/** for further information.

An authorised staff member carrying out a search can confiscate any item that they have reasonable grounds for suspecting:

- poses a risk to staff or pupils;
- is prohibited, or identified in the school rules for which a search can be made (see list above);
- is evidence in relation to an offense.

RISK ASSESSMENT

Informal risk assessments should be a routine part of life for staff working with pupils who may exhibit extreme behaviour. Responsible staff should think ahead to anticipate what might go wrong. If a proposed activity or course of action involves unacceptable risk the correct decision is to do something else.

Factors which might influence a more immediate risk assessment, and therefore a decision about how to intervene, might include the state of health and fitness of the staff member, their physical stature, competence, confidence and relationships with the pupils concerned. Confidence and competence are often related to the level of staff training. Other than in an emergency, staff should only attempt physical controls when they are confident that such action will result in a reduction of risk. When faced by extreme behaviour, or even in a fight situation, the judgement may be that by becoming involved, the member of staff will increase the chance of somebody getting hurt. In this the correct decision is to hold back from the physical controls.

BEHAVIOUR PLANS

Risk management is regarded as an integral part of behaviour management planning. All pupils who have been identified as presenting a risk should have a Behaviour Plan. The plan details any strategies which have been found to be effective for that individual, along with any particular responses which are not recommended. If particular physical techniques have been found to be effective they should be named, along with alerts to any which have proved ineffective or which caused problems in the past. Behaviour Plans should be considered alongside the Statement and any other planning documents which relate to the pupil. They should take account of age, sex, level of physical, emotional and intellectual development, special need and social context. Behaviour Plans should result from multi-professional collaboration and be included in the IEP.

RESPONDING TO UNFORESEEN EMERGENCIES

Even the best planning systems cannot cover every eventuality and the school recognises that there are unforeseen or emergency situations in which staff have to think on their feet. It is not enough to thoughtlessly apply rules without thinking through the likely consequences. The key principles are that any physical intervention should be:

- in the best interest of the child;
- reasonable and proportionate;
- intended to reduce risk;

- the least intrusive and restrictive of those options available which are likely to be effective.

Whenever a physical intervention has to be made there should be a verbal warning. Where possible, staff should always attempt to use diversion or diffusion in preference to physical interventions. They should only use the techniques and methods approved for use in this school. In general, if staff act in good faith and their actions are reasonable and proportionate, they will be supported.

THE POST INCIDENT SUPPORT STRUCTURE FOR PUPILS AND STAFF

Following a serious incident, it is the policy if this school to offer support for all involved. People take time to recover from a serious incident. Until the incident has subsided the only priority is to reduce risk and calm the situation down. Staff should avoid saying or doing anything, which could inflame the situation during the recovery phase. Immediate action should be taken to ensure medical help is sought if there are any injuries, which require more than basic first aid. All injuries should be reported and recorded using the school's systems. It is important to note that injury in itself is not evidence of malpractice. Even when staff attempt to do everything right, things can go wrong. Part of the post incident support for staff may involve a reminder of this, as people tend to blame themselves when things go wrong. Time needs to be found to repair relationships. When careful steps are taken to repair relationships a serious incident does not necessarily result in long term damage. This is an opportunity for learning for all concerned. Time needs to be given to following up incidents so that pupils have an opportunity to express their feelings, suggest alternative courses of action for the future and appreciate other people's perspective. When time and effort are put into a post incident support structure the outcome of a serious incident can be learning, growth and strengthened relationships.

RECORDING, MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Whenever an overpowering force is used the incident must be recorded using the approved forms. The incident sheets are kept in folders in the office and in Rainbow. All staff involved in an incident should contribute to the record, which should be completed within 24 hours and handed to the Inclusion Manager and then Head Teacher who will ensure that each incident is reviewed and instigate further action as required. **Parents/carers will be informed as soon as practicable and normally on the same day, including details of the incident, why force was used, and any resulting injury or follow-up actions.**

Staff should:

- Read through the school recording form carefully
- Take time to think about what actually happened and try to explain it clearly.
- Complete all names in full.
- Sign and date all forms.

Bear in mind these records will be retained and cannot be altered. They will be kept for many years and could form part of an investigation at some time in the future. Serious Incident Reports should not be completed until the individuals concerned have recovered from the immediate effects of the incident.

They should not be rushed. A record is written into the Incident Book, which is open to external monitoring and evaluation.

Following up an incident, consideration may be given to conducting a further risk assessment, reviewing the Behaviour Plan. Any further action in relation to a member of staff, or an individual pupil, will follow the appropriate procedures. (See staff and pupil disciplinary policy)

GETTING HELP

At this school the following support structures are in place:

- IEP's and Behaviour Support plans kept on file in each classroom to ensure all relevant information about each pupil is available to all members of staff working with them.
- Use of help protocols and language to remind all staff of availability of colleagues to offer help including change-overs of staff during a crisis situation with a pupil.
- Debrief sessions after a crisis with the pupil(s) involved, reflecting on how crisis was managed by all involved and identifying any points for review or learning.
- Weekly debrief sessions for all staff to share experiences, concerns and access support from each other, led by Inclusion Manager.
- Regular refresher meetings in the Team Teach strategies and techniques for all staff, and continuous review by LT to inform these.

COMPLAINTS

It is not uncommon for pupils to make allegations of inappropriate or excessive use of force following an incident. The school has a formal Complaints Procedure. Pupils should be reminded of the procedure and encouraged to use the appropriate channels. The complaints policy applies equally to staff. We are an open school and promote transparent policy and practice in order to protect the interests of staff and pupils alike. Any staff concerns regarding the welfare of children should be taken to the designated person for child protection. Any safety concerns should be reported to the designated person for Health and Safety.

SUSPENSIONS

For the vast majority of pupils, suspensions and permanent exclusions may not be necessary, as other strategies can manage their behaviour. If these approaches towards behaviour management have been exhausted, then suspensions and permanent exclusions will sometimes be necessary as a last resort. This is to ensure that other pupils and teaching staff can work in safety and are respected.

When considering whether to suspend or exclude a pupil the headteacher will use their professional judgement based on the individual circumstances of the case. The reasons below are examples of the types of circumstances that may warrant a suspension or permanent exclusion.

- Physical assault against a pupil

• Physical assault against an adult

• Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against a pupil

• Verbal abuse or threatening behaviour against an adult

• Use, or threat of use, of an offensive weapon or prohibited item that has been prohibited by a school's behaviour policy

• Bullying

• Racist abuse

• Abuse against sexual orientation or gender reassignment

• Abuse relating to disability

TYPES OF SCHOOL SUSPENSIONS AND EXCLUSIONS

Fixed Term Suspensions: These are short-term exclusions and pupils must be given a date for return to school. A return date should be given to parents in the letter informing them of the exclusion.

Lunch Time Suspensions: Pupils whose behaviour is disruptive at lunchtime and are excluded for the lunchtime session count as a fixed period exclusion of ½ day. A return date should be given to parents in the letter informing them of the lunchtime exclusion period.

Permanent Exclusions: Permanent exclusion is the most serious sanction a school can give if a child does something that is against the school's behaviour policy. It means that the child is no longer allowed to attend the school pending the outcome of the exclusion process. Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort.

SUSPENSION AND EXCLUSION PROCESS

Suspension or Exclusion will only be used as a last resort, in response to

• a serious breach or persistent breaches of the school's behaviour policy.

• circumstances where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Only the head teacher of a school can exclude a pupil and this must be on disciplinary grounds. A pupil may be suspended or excluded for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year), or permanently.

If a pupil is suspended or excluded, the parents will be notified immediately by telephone. They will be asked to attend the school to meet a member of the leadership team and receive in writing relevant information and to collect their child. This will include the period of the suspension or exclusion and the reason(s) for it. This will also be provided in writing with information regarding the parents' rights to make representations about the suspension or exclusion to the governing board. The Local Authority, the chair of governors, the pupil's Social Worker and VHS (if applicable) will also be notified immediately.

If a suspended or excluded pupil is of compulsory school age we will also notify the pupil's parents of the days(the period of suspension) on which they must ensure that the pupil is not present in a public place at any time during school hours.

It is important that during a suspension, pupils still receive their education. The school should take steps to ensure that work is set for pupils during the first five school days of a suspension. This can include utilising any online pathways such as Google Classroom or online platforms such as Mathletics and Reading Eggs.

Following a suspension the school will support pupils to reintegrate successfully into school life and full-time education. A return from suspension meeting will take place on the pupil's first day back to school. Parents will be expected to attend this meeting. During the meeting the pupil will be supported to reflect on the effect of their behaviour on themselves and others. They will also be reminded on how to meet the high expectations of behaviour in line with the school culture.

The school will put in place a range of measures to enable the pupil's successful reintegration which can include, but are not limited to:

- Regular sessions with learning mentor for planned pastoral support
- Use of a report card with personalised targets leading to personalised reports
- Regular reviews with pupil and parents to praise progress being made and raise and address any concerns at an early stage
- Set in place any external support needed e.g. Local Authority and CAMHS services,