



Great Oaks School Policies

Behaviour and Emotional Regulation Policy

Version 3

Approval date	25.11.25	Approved by	Great Oaks Governors
Next Review Date	November 2026	Lead Reviewer	Director of Pastoral and Personalised

Legislation and statutory requirements

This policy is based on advice from the Department for Education (DfE) on:

- [Behaviour and discipline in schools](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation at school](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Keeping Children Safe in Education](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting students with medical conditions at school](#)

It is also based on the [special educational needs and disability \(SEND\) code of practice](#).

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the [Education Act 2002](#), which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students
- Sections 88-94 of the [Education and Inspections Act 2006](#), which require schools to regulate students' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate students' property
- Schedule 1 of the [Education \(Independent School Standards\) Regulations 2014](#); paragraph 7 outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, paragraph 9 requires the school to have a written behaviour policy and paragraph 10 requires the school to have an anti-bullying strategy
- [DfE guidance](#) explaining that academies should publish their behaviour policy and anti-bullying strategy online

This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association.

Aims:

This policy aims to:

- Provide a consistent approach to supporting the development of positive behaviours which prepare our students for transition into adult life
- Support students to develop a sense of worth, identity and achievement
- Support students to develop safe and effective ways to communicate their needs
- Provide guidance to all staff, students, parents, governors and other stakeholders on how to support our students to self-regulate, manage their behaviour and feel safe so they are ready to learn
- Provide a holistic, whole-person, inclusive model for our understanding of self-regulation and behavioural needs

- Create a whole-school shared ethos and consistent practice when responding to behaviours, including those which challenge, which is underpinned with evidence-based practice and current research
- Develop and strengthen a culture which recognises and celebrates individual success and fosters a sense of belonging for all stakeholders- so they feel safe secure and valued
- Recognise the importance of positive relationships as being a key vehicle for developing self-regulation and supporting students to learn

Statement of Behaviour Principles:

At Great Oaks School, we have high expectations of student's behaviour, engagement, and achievement. Underpinning our Behaviour regulation policy is a shared ethos and set of beliefs. This is shared simply through our Behaviour Fundamentals (Appendix 1) Our Policy is based on a range of research and evidence-based approaches including work on Trauma informed and attachment aware approaches and the [EEF Guidance on Improving Behaviour in Schools \(2019\)](#).

At Great Oaks School, we believe:

- All young people want to behave well
- All behaviour is communicative and often reflects an emotion or feeling – we must ensure that all students are supported to communicate their needs safely and appropriately using their preferred communication system
- Where behaviour reflects an unmet need, we understand that we need to meet this need to change behaviour
- Positive, professional relationships with students are key and underpin positive behaviour for learning
- We are all able to develop our ability to self-regulate our emotions and behaviour- Positive adult and student relationships are integral for this to occur
- Through co-regulation of feelings, students learn to become more independent and develop self-regulation skills
- With the right support and intervention, students can learn to self-regulate and communicate their needs
- Just like with great teaching and learning, we will need to differentiate, scaffold, and support our approach to behaviour management to meet the needs of the individual
- An ethos which promotes unconditional positive regard for all; recognising and celebrating individual strengths, builds self-esteem and promotes positive relationships
- Being “fair” is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity)

Definitions:

As a special school catering to a vast range of needs, it is difficult to define misbehaviours as each student's behaviours may be as a result of their special educational need. The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent students with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to managing misbehaviours or behaviours which challenge are differentiated to cater to the needs of the student.

However, within this policy we have included some general definitions and examples to ensure we have covered all aspects of guidance.

Misbehaviour can be defined as:

- Disruption in lessons, in corridors between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes
- Non-completion of classwork or homework
- Rude behaviour or attitude towards staff, peers, or the environment

Serious misbehaviour can be defined as:

- Repeated breaches of the school rules
- Any form of bullying
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching without consent)
- Sexual harassment, meaning unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, such as:

- Sexual comments
- Sexual jokes or taunting
- Physical behaviour like interfering with clothes
- Online sexual harassment such as unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, or sharing of unwanted explicit content
- Vandalism
- Theft
- Fighting
- Smoking
- Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour
- Possession of any prohibited items. These are:
 - Knives or weapons, Alcohol, Illegal drugs, Stolen items, Tobacco and cigarette papers, Electronic Cigarettes or Vapes, Fireworks, Pornographic images
 - Any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student)

Bullying

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.

Bullying is, therefore:

- Deliberately hurtful
- Repeated, often over a period of time
- Difficult to defend against

Bullying can include:

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including:	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic/biphobic • Transphobic • Disability-based
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

Details of our school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying are set out in our anti-bullying strategy.

Policy in Practice:

In order to effectively implement this policy and respond to behaviours which challenge, a whole school ethos of Positive Behaviour support is promoted. If challenging behaviour is shown by the students, they are to be supported in a positive fashion, to support their well-being and enable them to manage the crisis as soon as possible. The ethos of PBS promotes staff to understand and interpret challenging situations and interactions without apportioning blame, seeking retribution or their own emotional responses.

Roles and responsibilities of staff:

Maintaining and supporting the development of positive behaviours is the responsibility of all stakeholders within the Great Oaks Community. A consistent whole school approach to supporting the development of positive behaviours including modelling by all adults is essential.

The Trustees, Governing Body, Headteacher and staff are responsible for ensuring that all aspects of the school's Behaviour Regulation Policy and its application, promote equality for all students. The roles include: -

- a) The Governing Body agreeing the principles underlying the Policy
- b) The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team in framing and establishing an environment that encourage positive behaviour and regular attendance
- c) The Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team ensuring staff receive training, support, and supervision to ensure they have the skills, knowledge and understanding to implement the behaviour regulation policy
- d) All staff in ensuring that the policy is consistently and fairly applied
- e) Ensuring that students who are able to behave in a way that promotes the learning of all in the community.

In order to achieve this, we expect all adults to:

- Model appropriate positive behaviours, communication and interaction at all times
- Provide a predictable and safe environment, explicitly based on nurture and attachment principles which promote security through **consistent routines** and **clear boundaries**
- Be intentional in **providing opportunities for connection** throughout the school ensuring they support the feelings of a safe environment
- Have an unrelenting focus on recognising, celebrating, promoting, and reinforcing positive behaviours and achievement
- Display **unconditional positive regard for all learners**, acknowledging and addressing any inappropriate behaviours which may arise by attuning to the learner, their need and working with them on strategies
- Confidently and consistently employ warmth, humour, acceptance, and trust as a way to support and engage students through connection.
- Understand the importance of PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) consistently apply this understanding, ensuring interactions are PACEful
- Recognise that dealing with behaviour can challenge us and accept help and support when offered
- Be in control of their emotions and respond to negative behaviour in a deliberately calm manner

Whole School Systems to Promote Positive Behaviours

Great Oaks School has a growing student population with a range of individual and differing needs. We recognise that there while there is no-one-size fits all approach for our school community- there are key systems and strategies that evidence indicates work and have a great impact. These systems and strategies are in use across our Pathways and class groups:

- **Routines**- Consistent class/lesson/ activity routines support students to learn expectations, manage anxieties and mentally and physically prepare for the day. Consistent routines allow students to feel safe and therefore learn to how to self-regulate, engage with learning, and manage their behaviours positively. Routines need to be explicitly taught and rehearsed, the more consistency there is for our students, the easier and more reinforcing they are for students.
- **Descriptive Praise**- By using descriptive praise, we are making it explicitly clear to students what they are doing well while also reinforcing behaviours we want to promote.
- **Student of the Week**- Each class recognise and celebrate a student's success across the by choosing a student of the week – Student's receive a certificate in Assembly and the reasons for this are shared
- **Raffle Tickets**- Students earn raffle tickets for demonstrating positive behaviours throughout the week. These tickets are put into a raffle and winners picked each week on A Friday earn a prize
- **Positive Postcards**- Any member of staff can send home a positive postcard to a student and their family to recognise and celebrate their success for a specific reason. These postcards should recognise when a student have gone "Over and above" and explicitly detail the reasons
- **Positive Phone Calls**- Teachers and Pathway managers will call families to share positive news when in order to praise students while strengthening the school and parent partnership.
- **Zones of Regulation**- Zones of regulation is a strategy which supports students to understand how a feeling relates to an emotion) Teachers must ensure they have strategies in place to support students to recognise which zone they are in and return to the green zone
- **Emotion Coaching**- Staff are being trained to support the implementation of Emotion Coaching at Great Oaks. Emotion coaching is an evidence-based approach to support students to understand regulate and reflect on their behaviour (See appendix 2).

Alongside our whole school systems, each Pathway will have their own reward systems and additional strategies which are overseen by the Pathway Manager. Individual students may also have personalised approaches, including reward systems as appropriate to their needs. These will be detailed in individual behaviour plans.

Consequences

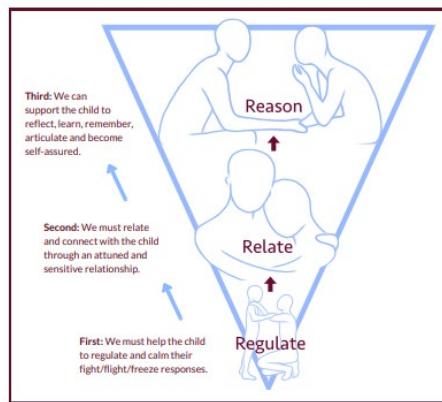
We do not believe in sanctions or punishment as a means of managing or attempting to control student behaviour. However, we believe it is important to teach our students that there are consequences to actions and so they learn to take responsibility for their actions. We aim to teach our students as to how a specific behaviour relates to a consequence.

In this way, we prefer to use a logical or natural consequence as opposed to punishment. A logical consequence aims to support a young person to develop self-control and learn from their mistakes in a supportive atmosphere. Logical consequences directly relate to the misbehaviour or action a student has taken. An example of this could be a student who has not engaged during a lesson and therefore not completed their learning needs to make this time up. Or a student who caused damage to a display needs to help repair this. Staff must consider a student's developmental stage and understanding when deciding on a logical consequence so that it is meaningful, and the student is learning something from the process. It is important that any misbehaviour is separated from the student so that they are aware that they are still liked and valued.

At Great Oaks, we never remove a curriculum entitlement as a consequence or punishment for behaviour. This includes off-site activities such as swimming, educational trips and Friday activities. If staff feel a student's behaviour is unsafe and may cause a risk, they should discuss this with the Pathway Manager and implement an individual risk assessment looking at specific measures which could be put in place to support the student's inclusion. Where the risks are considered too high and measures would not lower this, a discussion should be had with a member of LMT and a decision will be made as to whether it is safe for the student to participate. If this is the case, parents will be informed.

Responding to behaviours which challenge where a student is dysregulated or distressed

The Three R's: Reaching The Learning Brain
 Dr Bruce Perry, a pioneering neuroscientist in the field of trauma, has shown us that to help a vulnerable child to learn, think and reflect, we need to intervene in a simple sequence.



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Figure 1* Fourth R- Repair was added by Louise Bomber

Details of how to support students who show behaviour which challenge in response to distress will be included in the individual behaviour plan. This will include the extent and strategies for how to support the repair stage with a student.

Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI)

The use of reasonable force, including RPI may be used in order to support the safety of the school community. It is important that RPI is not used for compliance or as a punishment for certain behaviours. All incidents where RPI are used are recorded by staff involved and reviewed by the Assistant Headteacher for behaviour to see how this can be prevented and determine what further support is needed for the student or if support or training is needed for staff. At Great Oaks staff are trained by SecuriCare in Preventing and managing challenging behaviour. See the physical intervention policy for more details.

Zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence

The school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.

Students are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

The school's response will be:

- Proportionate
- Considered
- Supportive
- Decided on a case-by-case basis

Use of Detentions

Where it is a logical consequence, detentions may be used either during break and lunchtime or after the school-day. Detentions may be used if a student has not engaged with their learning and needs to catch up or is not in lessons and again needs to be catch up.

Detentions may also be used in response to a more serious misbehaviour such as intentional physical aggression towards staff or peers. Detentions will only be used where they are developmentally appropriate, and students understand the link between their behaviour and the consequence. Parents should be informed of any use of detentions.

Use of Internal Exclusion

When responding to a student who is highly distressed or in crisis, it is important that staff remember the Four R's, **Regulate, Relate, Reason and Repair***. During the regulate stage it may be that physical intervention is needed to help support them to a safer place or maintain the safety of the student in distress, other students or staff.

The time it takes to work through the 4-stage process will vary depending on the individual. It may be that the reasoning and repair needs to happen much later for the student.

We believe it is important that all young people have the opportunity to repair or "make good" something that has happened as a result of their behaviour. It is important this is not about shaming the student but providing them with an opportunity to put something right if they are able to understand the impact of their behaviour.

Where it is developmentally appropriate, students will be supported to take responsibility for their actions and repair the relationship with others involved. Even students with complex difficulties can be supported to repair; this will look different for each student. It cannot be assumed how a student is feeling. Unresolved issues can cause anxiety in students, and this can cause behaviour to escalate.

There may be occasions where serious incidents of misbehaviour result in an internal exclusion. These situations will only occur if it is developmentally appropriate for the student and will be used as an opportunity for a member of staff to support the student in understanding the impact of their actions and problem solving a way forward next time. Internal Exclusions will take place under the supervision of a member of the Extended leadership and management team (ELMT) or by one of the behaviour and pastoral support officers. Internal exclusions are logged, and parents are informed by the Pathway Manager. All internal exclusion are reviewed to ensure it is only be used when necessary.

Use of Suspension (Previously Fixed Term Exclusions)

Great Oaks School on occasion may use suspension in response to serious incidents of misbehaviour. While suspension is not in itself an effective strategy for bringing about change in a young person's behaviour. What it does, in some circumstances, is to give the student time to reflect. Equally, for the school to modify what is in place for a student and adaptations to be put into place in the physical environment and learning environment to try to prevent further incidents.

Permanent Exclusions

At Great Oaks, the safety of staff and students is paramount. Behaviours which would constitute a serious breach of this policy and therefore trigger consideration of permanent exclusion include: -

- Persistent bullying / harassment of students or staff –in person or online-
- Persistent racist or homophobic behaviours
- Physical and verbal assault on students or staff
- Sexual assault or persistent sexual harassment
- Serious and/or persistent damage to school property

Prior to considering Permanent Exclusion, the Local Authority will be informed of Incidents and a meeting with all relevant professionals and family network invited to consider how best to meet the needs of the student.

Monitoring arrangements

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the Senior Leadership team annually. At each review, the policy will be approved by the headteacher.

Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Exclusions policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Physical Intervention Policy

Appendix 1 – Behaviour Fundamentals

Great Oaks School Behaviour Fundamentals

Recognition

Adults should **recognise** and **celebrate** student achievements and strengths. This can be done through positive praise postcards, student of the week certificates, phone calls home or other more individual rewards.

High Expectations

All adults should have high expectations of student's behaviour, engagement and achievement. Staff should focus on strengths and build on these to prepare students for adulthood.

Logical Consequences

Consequences should be used to support students to understand the impact of their behaviour and support them to take responsibility for their actions. Consequences need to be developmentally appropriate.

Relationships

All adults should use opportunities to build positive and professional relationships with students. This supports students to feel safe, secure, and valued. Effective positive behaviour support comes from knowing the student, and developing "*connection cash*".

Self-Regulation

Skills and strategies for self-regulation should be explicitly taught. This involves consistent adult modelling as well as recognising, labelling and validating emotions. Staff should use **Zones of Regulation** and **Emotion coaching** to support this.

Meeting Individual Needs

Each student at Great Oaks has individual needs. While still having high expectations, we need to differentiate and tailor our approach to positive behaviour support based on individual needs.

Respect

Respect should underpin all interactions and relationships at Great Oaks. Adults should always model respectful relationships, communication and interaction.

Communication

All behaviour is communication. Part of our ethos and culture is supporting students to communicate using their preferred chosen method. Staff should ensure that students have access to communication systems e.g. PECS at all times.

Routines

Students should be explicitly taught routines for all aspects of the school day



