



Understanding and Supporting Behaviours Policy Incl. Behaviour Principles

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Role	Deputy Headteacher
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June 2025	26/04/25	SPo	Policy name and role change	16/06/25 - 1080	<i>ElWatts</i>
September 2026	1 st September 2025	J. Rivers	Updated policy holder details, logo, reporting information and links – all updates highlighted in yellow		
June 2027	June 2026	Milly	Full review	15/06/2026 - 2029	<i>ElWatts</i>

BEHAVIOUR PRINCIPLES

CHAIR OF GOVERNORS

GEMMA WATTS

Written Statement of Behaviour Principles from the Governing Body

Brackenfield SEND School caters for a wide range of pupils with varying levels of need; communication and cognition. Brackenfield's fundamental aim is to support pupils to develop functional lifeskills including the ability to regulate their emotions so that pupils leave ready to transition to the next stage in their lives. At Brackenfield we believe that all are pupils want to learn and want to behave in a way that allows themselves and others to do this and if they are behaving in a way that impacts their ability to do this then there is an unmet need.

We understand some of our pupils are more likely to experience Social Emotional and Mental Health difficulties (SEMH) as a result of their specific learning needs and variety of other factors such as experiencing trauma. We understand that behaviours which challenge always happen for a reason and might be the only way a pupil can communicate their needs and wants at that moment in time. We work with families (families is taken to mean anyone with parental responsibility) to support pupils both inside and outside of school; we recognise that parents are the experts on their child and listen to their advice and guidance on how best to support their child. We recognise that above all Brackenfield is a learning environment and we continually support all pupils so that learning can take place for everyone.

To the Staff Body

In order to support the SEMH needs of all our pupils you operate an attachment aware approach with a shared understanding that behaviour is a method of communication. You recognise that people's behaviour is shaped by their attitudes, experiences and their specific educational needs. You appreciate that to support behaviour you have to first understand the root cause of the behaviour. You also appreciate that due to some pupils' complex and varied learning needs and life experiences that some pupils may always display behaviour that is challenging. You recognise, share and celebrate pupils' hard work and efforts.

You understand that the expectations and stresses of school life and home life can cause anxiety for our pupils which results in displays of challenging behaviour. You work closely with families to provide holistic support. You support our pupils to make appropriate choices whilst recognising that this can be difficult for our pupils due to their needs and experiences. If pupils display challenging behaviour you take action to ensure that all people are emotionally and physically safe. If necessary, you use restrictive physical interventions to keep pupils and others safe. You receive training around restrictive practices and know how to use these ethically, legally and always within the best interest of the pupil (s); you know to use the minimum amount of force for the shortest amount of time. You then record, report and reflect on the incident and work together as a team to put into any plans to support the pupil further. You will use restorative and reflective practice to help pupils reflect after incidents and restore any relationships that may have been damaged. You will not use sanctions or punishments. Any response to an incident will always be appropriate to a pupil's cognitive ability and their understanding of the situation.

To Our Pupils

At Brackenfield you will all receive an education. You will be cared for and kept safe. Your hard work and efforts will be recognised, shared and celebrated. You will always be treated fairly but this does not mean we will treat you all in the same way. Being fair means that we will do our best to give you all what you need to be successful. What you may need and what someone else needs may be very different. We recognise that you are all individuals, and we make sure that we offer you an education and environment that is right for you. We understand that your behaviour is how you communicate with us and for some of you that is the only method of communication that you have; we will always try to understand what you are telling us. We will use praise and recognition of efforts in the moment and make sure you know why you have done well. We will help you learn to self-regulate and support you with co-regulation. We will use restorative and reflective practice to support you to develop your ability to manage your behaviour, emotions and relationships.

Our Promise as a Governing Body

We will support the Executive Headteacher and Staff Team to ensure that every pupil has the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and learn free from the disruption of others. We will not tolerate any form of discrimination towards pupils, staff, visitors or within in our own governing body. We will ensure staff and volunteers always model an excellent example to pupils. We will support the staff body to positively support behaviour in line with the behaviour policy. We will uphold our duty as a governing body to ensure that suspensions and permanent exclusions will only be used as a last resort, and only when they are likely to have an impact on changing behaviour or ensuring the safety of pupils and staff. We will support the staff team to help pupils take responsibility for their actions where this is cognitively appropriate. We will listen to and act on pupil and parent voice. Finally, we emphasise that bullying, racism, violence or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

Gemma Watts

Chair of Governors



UNDERSTANDING AND SUPPORTING BEHAVIOURS POLICY

Introduction

Brackenfield SEND School provides an education for pupils with varying levels of need. We recognise and value the individual needs of our pupils, and acknowledge the complexities associated with this, which may increase the likelihood of communication presenting as behaviours of distress. It is therefore a priority of ours to work towards understanding what our pupils are trying to communicate and respond to all behaviour of distress in a respectful manner.

Legislation

This policy is informed by and complies with the following legislation and guidance:

- Education and Inspections Act 2006
- Equality Act 2010
- Children Act 1989 and 2004
- Human Rights Act 1998
- SEND Code of Practice (2015)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) (latest version)
- DfE Behaviour in Schools Guidance (2022, updated)
- DfE Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Guidance (2023)
- Use of Reasonable Force (DfE)
- Reducing the Need for Restraint and Restrictive Intervention (2019)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Advice for Schools (latest version)
- Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)

This policy recognises the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to make reasonable adjustments for pupils with disabilities and additional needs.

Safeguarding

All behaviour is understood within a safeguarding context. Staff recognise that behaviours of distress may be an indicator of unmet safeguarding needs, including abuse, neglect, exploitation or mental health difficulties.

All concerns arising from behaviour incidents will be recorded and, where appropriate, reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) in line with the Safeguarding Policy and KCSIE.




Staff will be particularly vigilant to:

- Child-on-child abuse
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Emotional wellbeing and mental health concerns
- Indicators of exploitation or neglect

Our Ethos

Our school ethos of 'Belong, Believe and Be Brave', works on our pupils' self-esteem and worth through encouraging independence at every opportunity.

Whilst we acknowledge and understand pupils have differing levels of need and therefore support, we maintain high expectation for all of our pupils and are always actively encouraging and striving for all of our pupils to 'Believe, Belong and Be Brave'.

Belong	Believe	Be Brave
		
<p>Caring for each other; helping each other; wearing our uniforms; taking part in school events; listening to each other;</p>	<p>Trying our hardest; treating everyone fairly;</p>	<p>Never giving up; trying even when we find something hard; telling the truth</p>

Our Approach

At Brackefield, we support pupils in a person centred, physical and academic environment. This allows our pupils to be supported proactively at all times, with the aim of preventing behaviours of distress.

Behaviours of distress can be described as any behaviour that causes harm to self, others.

All staff work to understand the function of the behaviour of distress, in order to support the pupils in the best way possible to get their needs met.

Our understanding is that behaviours of distress will have a function:

- Escape/avoid.
- Sensory
- Tangible
- Connection/attention seeking.
- Biological

Our Support

We adopt a graduated response to support at Brackefield following a tiered approach to support.

This includes our:

- Universal offer – This is the best practice support that all of our pupils receive every day. A pupil centred curriculum offer underpinned by our core 4. Knowledge and understanding of communication n sensory preferences and trauma and attachment informed support.
- Targeted offer – In addition to the above, pupils who may be experiencing a change from their baseline presentation. Individualized support will be offered by the team working directly with the pupil.

- Specialized offer – In addition to the above, specialist support will be drawn upon to understand the significant changes in presentation and external professionals may be involved in supporting.

All staff receive regular training in:

- Behaviour support and de-escalation
- Safeguarding and KCSIE
- SEND and communication needs
- Use of restrictive intervention (where appropriate)

Training is regularly refreshed to ensure practice reflects current guidance.

Proactive support

Proactive support at Brackenfield School is considered through the use of:

- Intentional learning environments
- Clearly zoned areas
- Total communication approaches
- Specialist teaching strategies
- Attention to communication styles
- Implementation of sensory support
- Knowledge and understanding of pupils history
- Trauma informed and relational practice
- Skilled, well trained staff

Proactive support strategies are used throughout our day at Brackenfield, and also as part of individualised interventions to prevent behaviours of distress. Our best practice support is underpinned by the capable environments principles (McGill), aligned with our 'Core 4'.

Choice and Voice <i>Every pupil deserves the tools and support to express themselves and make meaningful choices throughout their day</i>	Functionality <i>Learning is most effective when it's linked to real-life, purposeful tasks that support pupils to thrive in their daily routines and environments</i>	Independence <i>Pupils are empowered to take increasing ownership of their learning, care, and decision-making at every stage of development</i>	Joy in Living <i>Joy is essential to learning—through fun, play, relationships, and creative expression, pupils connect, grow, and flourish</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Communication Approach and Dual Coding • Environment and planning reflect motivators and preferences • Actively engaged staff • Pupil Voice sought and responded to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Routines, structure and boundaries • Application of skills in real life contexts • Activities to support pupils needs, wants and demands of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problem solving opportunities • Decision making opportunities • Allow failure and celebrate success • Concrete-pictorial before abstract 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Journey to Learn, applied relational informed practice and connecting with others • Pupils are engaged in learning • Sensory toolkit and regulation • Embedded Peli-Can Approach

Each pupil has a **Person Centred Plan** which outline their individualised support needs. The information in this plan will direct staff on how to support pupils to ensure their needs are met, they are able to engage in learning, remain regulated and continue to thrive at Brackenfield.

Self-Regulation and Co-Regulation: All our pupils need support to regulate their emotions and arousal levels and recognise when they are feeling stressed. Staff understand what heightening and heightened arousal looks like for each pupil and work with pupils to regulate their emotions and arousal levels. Some pupils will always need an adult to help them regulate and staff offer

opportunities to coregulate – this could be through calm talking, play, intensive interaction, mirroring or simply being present.

Understanding of Pupil Stage of Development: All our pupils are developmentally different from their neurotypical peers. When viewing behaviours and considering how to manage behaviour effectively it is important to consider the likely developmental age of the pupil – this could be markedly different from their chronological age. Brackenfield works to support behaviour by having a detailed understanding of each pupil's stage of development and understanding in order to pitch appropriate learning activities

For example, not giving work that is too hard for pupils to complete that they become despondent or too easy that they become bored. This understanding also supports expectations around socialisation. For example, pupils that are only operating at the parallel level of play will not be expected to take turns items; they will be encouraged to participate in shared play first.

Curriculum: Each pupil has a personalised and bespoke curriculum offer which is informed by their Education Health and Care Plan. The personalised curriculum has been designed to support each pupils' personal and cognitive development by providing pupils with relevant, interesting and challenging experiences.

Total Communication Approach: The adoption of a Total Communication Approach supports pupils' ability to communicate effectively and therefore reducing the likelihood of challenging behaviour. It also ensures continuity within the school environment and classroom set up therefore reducing pupil anxiety. Please see the Total Communication Approach Policy for more information.

SMSC and British Values: We promote the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils and prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life. The promotion of British Values within Brackenfield supports an understanding and tolerance of all people. See the Personal Development Policy for more information.

PSHE: Our PSHE curriculum aims to provide children with the knowledge and skills to keep themselves happy, healthy and safe, as well as to prepare them for life and work. See the PHSE and SRE Policy for further information.

Character Education: Brackenfield Characters are the attributes that parents, pupils and staff feel are important for our pupils to acquire. Staff actively provide opportunities for character development and seek out and recognise pupils displaying these characters. See the Personal Development Policy for more information.

Reactive Strategies

Our goal at Brackenfield is to offer a rich curriculum, and therefore prevent escalation of behaviours of distress, however, we recognise the communication complexities of our pupils, and acknowledge that behaviours of distress may occur.

Non-restrictive Reactive Strategies are responses to behaviours of distress, without the use of physical intervention or imposing on the pupils freedom, movement or isolating them from their peers, this is called de-escalation.

The use of de-escalation aims to reduce the risk of harm in a person centred way, without imposing restrictions on the pupils. De-escalation is a personalised approach for each pupil, this will be clearly documented within each pupils behaviour support plan, which staff should be aware of.

This can include:

- Verbal de-escalation
- Distraction
- Environmental adjustments
- Positive reinforcement
- Problem solving

We recognise that, despite our best efforts, de-escalation is not always successful and reactive strategies may need to be used to maintain safety and minimise the immediate risk. Reactive strategies can be non-restrictive or restrictive, including physical intervention and restraint.

The school follows DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Searches will only be carried out:

- By authorised staff
- Where there is reasonable grounds
- In a way that respects dignity and safeguarding

Parents will be informed where appropriate.

Restrictive Physical Interventions

This refers to physically supporting someone to do something, or physically stopping someone from doing something, all of which is centred around reducing the risk or harm. Whilst we aim to minimise the use of restrictive physical interventions, there are times where the level of risk means that physical intervention is necessary.

Examples of restrictive physical interventions are:

Physical restraint: Any direct physical contact where the intervenors intention is prevent or restrict the movement of the pupil.

Chemical restraint: the use of medication which is prescribed and administered for the purpose of controlling or subsiding behaviour, where it is not prescribed for the treatment of a formally identified physical or mental illness.

The school is committed to reducing the use of restrictive practices. Any use of restrictive intervention will:

- Be a last resort
- Be reasonable, necessary and proportionate
- Be the least restrictive option available
- Be used for the shortest time possible

Restrictive interventions will **never** be used:

- As a punishment
- For staff convenience
- In a way that compromises dignity or human rights

Following any restrictive intervention:

- A record will be completed promptly
- A debrief will be offered to the pupil and staff
- Plans will be reviewed to reduce future risk

Post incident support

We have a wide range of cognitive understanding and engagement with adult led activities within the school pupil population. The most important aspect of the post incident stage is to understand the reason for the behaviour and support with more socially acceptable ways of communicating this.

Where appropriate we operate a restorative justice approach which allows all parties to contribute to a solution and helps our pupils with their problem solving. Social stories; circle time; reflective report cards and assemblies are all also used to support pupils to reflect and identify strategies for coping in the future.

Where pupils are not able to engage in a restorative approach staff members will support the pupil to restore and rebuild relationships in a way that is appropriate. This might be intensive interaction, play or shared experiences – or whatever is an appropriate activity. It is important staff members able engage in positive interactions with pupils to build their confidence back in the relationship.

Suspensions and permanent exclusions will only be used in line with DfE statutory guidance and where it is lawful, reasonable and proportionate. Decisions will take into account the needs of pupils with SEND and the school's duties under the Equality Act 2010.

There will always be staff actions that are designed to lessen the chance of reoccurrence. These might be updating behaviour support plans, communication with parents and external professionals, changes to support at school; restorative and reflective work and increased understanding of need of the pupil.

The school recognises the link between behaviour and mental health. Pupils may display behaviours of distress due to anxiety, trauma or other mental health needs.

Staff will:

- Respond in a trauma-informed and relational way
- Avoid punitive responses
- Work with families and external professionals

The school will ensure access to appropriate support where needed.

Recording and monitoring

All incidents of challenging behaviour are recorded on Iris Adapt on the day of the incident. Staff members fill in information about what happened before, during and after the incident. Staff also describe on the intensity scale of the incident:

Mild, No aggressive or violent behaviours. Has little to no impact on others. Does not put others at risk.

Moderate, Threats of aggression or violence. An action that has not caused an injury. Has an indirect impact on others such as noise being a trigger for others' behaviours or distracting others during incident.

Difficult, Aggression towards self or others which may cause a minor injury which could need some minor first aid. Throwing items or tipping furniture which may put others or self at risk of significant harm. Absconding to an unsafe place within school or climbing on something inappropriate / beyond a safe height. Displaying behaviours that neglect self-dignity such as removing clothes, flashing etc.

Severe, Aggression or violence which results in a significant injury that requires medical attention. Behaviours that put self or others at risk of significant harm. Actions that result in significant damage that means a space becomes unusable. Absconding when out in the community.

Critical, A behaviour that results in an emergency services intervention. An action that results in an injury requiring the accident and emergency department of a hospital. Absconding when out in the community the results in emergency services interventions.

Staff members also categorise the incident as damage, harming self, harming others or socially inappropriate.

Any physical interventions need to be recorded on Iris Adapt as part of the overall incident. Staff members make the decision on whether the physical intervention was a guide (minimal resistance from the pupil); control (moderate resistance from the pupil) and restraint (rigorous resistance from pupil). All restrictive physical interventions are communicated to parents on the day of the incident. All physical interventions are reviewed by an SLT member who is a Team Teach Tutor on the day of the incident or as soon as possible after. Feedback is given to the staff member(s) as to whether the physical intervention was viewed to be necessary, reasonable and proportionate and further actions will be determined from a result of this review.

When there has been a Restrictive Physical Intervention, parents are called and informed every time. Parents are also consulted regarding behaviour plan updates

The leadership team will also analyse data MERly to identify any patterns across the school.

The leadership team use our behaviour reporting system to analyse behaviour for the pupils within the classes within their zones. This supports identifying any patterns, need for resources or additional training or support needed within a particular area.

Class teachers are encouraged to use the data to inform their practice to ensure appropriate techniques are used and this is data informed.

Behaviour support plans

A Behaviour Support Plan is used to outline the person-centred details of how to support the pupil, this will include proactive strategies, de-escalation techniques and any reactive strategies which may be needed where there is a significant risk.

The support plan will identify what staff should expect to see from the pupil as the pupils level of arousal travels 'up' the arousal curve, and how staff should respond to support at each stage.

This will include:

- Supporting maximum engagement when the pupil is at baseline
- Supporting de-escalation as the pupils arousal levels rise
- Reactive to dysregulation, with potential restrictive practices
- Supporting pupils following dysregulation
- Rebuilding relationships following dysregulation

The behaviour support plan will provide a risk assessment for each behaviour which supports staff to understand the frequency and severity of behaviours displayed by pupils.

The school recognises that children may display harmful behaviours towards others. All incidents will be taken seriously and responded to in line with safeguarding procedures.

This includes:

- Bullying
- Harmful sexual behaviour
- Physical aggression

A restorative and educational approach will be used wherever appropriate, alongside safeguarding responses.

Rewards

Brackenfield does not operate a reward-based behaviour system. We recognise, celebrate and share hard work and effort, but we do not reward it.

We are promoting a commitment to lifelong learning and independence for adulthood; the learning that takes place is linked to the value of that task. For example, we learn how to go to the shops and complete the shopping so we can feed ourselves. If we were rewarded for completing activities to do with this learning, we risk de-valuing the importance of the task and make the motivation about a reward instead of learning. We want the incentive to engage to be able what we can learn and do – not an unlinked extrinsic reward.

Brackenfield recognises and celebrates learning, engagement and character development through positive recognition, specific praise and sharing with their families, peers and other staff.