



**Horizons Specialist Academy Trust**  
*Providing infinite opportunities*

# Behaviour Policy

Reviewed and adopted by the CEO: 23 April 2026  
Date of next review: Spring 2027  
Responsible Officer: Executive Principal

## **Policy statement of intent<sup>1</sup>**

All of HSAT's academies work hard to ensure that pupils can learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment where they are protected from disruption. The Behaviour Policy is implemented in our academies through academy-specific, published Behaviour Guidelines. The effective implementation of these guidelines, in response to this policy, creates a positive behaviour culture in each academy, in which pupils are encouraged to reflect the value of the academy they attend.

The range of behaviours presented by pupils attending the Trust's academies is both broad and varied as befits an organisation for children and young people with learning disabilities, autism spectrum disorder, social, emotional and mental health difficulties and physical difficulties.

The Trust has a clear expectation that all pupils will be encouraged to maintain the highest standards of behaviour at all times.<sup>2</sup> However, encouraging and supporting these standards will require different approaches that reflect the needs, age, and abilities of individual pupil groups. At times, pupils may display very challenging behaviours which vary across the academies. Establishing and maintaining positive pupil behaviour is essential, including for safeguarding. Behaviour is always recognised as a form of communication which requires understanding, teaching, modelling and reinforcement.

## **Equality Impact Assessment:**

This policy has undergone a high-level Equality Impact Assessment to ensure it aligns with the Equality Act 2010 and does not adversely impact individuals with protected characteristics. No disproportionate impacts have been identified, and the policy supports fairness, inclusion and equal access for all pupils.

## **Introduction:**

Establishing and maintaining positive pupil behaviour requires a structured and integrated framework which encompasses:

- the curriculum
- learning and teaching
- academy ethos
- personal and social development at pupil level
- involvement and support from the parent/carer body
- the use of external agencies to support pupils and their families when required

A Trust Behaviour Policy is best achieved where there are clear principles, understood by all, which inform clear and consistent practice across all aspects of pupil engagement within the Trust.

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<sup>1</sup> 'Behaviour in Schools Advice for Headteachers and Staff' September 2022, DfE

<sup>2</sup> Positive environments where children can flourish, Ofsted Guide March 2018

## **Trust Principles:**

- All pupils are valued as fully participating members of the Trust community.
- Mutual care and respect are at the heart of Trust service delivery.
- All staff and pupils are entitled to respect at all times.
- It is the behaviour that is unacceptable and not the pupil. Unconditional positive regard will underpin behaviour management.
- Restraint and Restrictive Intervention will be used in accordance with the DFE document 'Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools – April 2026' and HSAT guidance on restrictive interventions.
- Behaviour Management is the responsibility of all staff.

## **From Principles to Practice:**

- Effective anti-bullying guidelines will be in place across the Trust.
- Rules, rewards and sanctions in individual establishments will be clear, contributed to by all, and understood by all and based on a positive behaviour model.
- Staff training in behaviour management will be given, as appropriate to ensure that all staff can respond to, and intervene appropriately, when behavioural issues arise. This will include de-escalation and restraint and restrictive intervention techniques where appropriate.
- Behaviour management across HSAT is underpinned by trauma-informed and neurodiversity-affirming principles. Staff recognise the impact of adverse childhood experiences and neurological differences. They prioritise emotional safety, regulation, structure, predictability and positive relationships.
- There is an understanding from all staff that 'one size fits all' Behaviour Guidelines are not practicable for pupils with SEND, and that behaviour will be dealt with on an individual basis.
- Behaviour data, including suspensions and use of restrictive intervention, will be monitored for patterns relating to protected characteristics to ensure fairness, consistency and early identification of disproportionality.
- Behavioural incidents will be logged and analysed at least termly at academy level. Where appropriate to individual pupil need, individual behaviour programmes will be established and monitored at tutor level.
- Where pupils are believed to be carrying a prohibited item, staff will follow the DfE 'Searching, screening and confiscation at school' document
- Pupils and parent/carers will be provided with a clear understanding of the Behaviour Guidelines of the academy expectations upon admission or through the planned transition activities
- The relevant provisions in legislation also set out the permitted purposes for which restraint and restrictive intervention can be applied in different settings and services, such as preventing injury, protecting property and reducing danger.<sup>3</sup> Such restraint and restriction should be exceptional as an event, and such intervention should never be used routinely or frequently with individual children or young people. The need to secure their safety and well-being and that of others around them, including staff, should be the ultimate determinant of when such intervention should be considered and implemented. Restraint and restriction must

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<sup>3</sup> Use of Reasonable Force in Schools, DfE 2013

always be at the uppermost end of a hierarchy of response and should involve a clear element of risk assessment prior to its implementation.

### **Core Values:**

- A focus on the child or young person's safety and welfare should underpin any use of restraint.
- Children, young people and staff should be treated fairly and with dignity and respect.
- Minimising the risk of harm to children, young people, and staff should be a key priority.
- Where possible, a decision to restrain a child or young person should be based on their best interests balanced against respecting the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Staff must consider how a pupil's disability, communication needs, trauma history or other protected characteristic may influence their behaviour, and must take this into account when assessing risk and deciding on any intervention.

### **Key Principles of Restraint:**

- Restraint should be the last response to behaviour that challenges. Appropriate de-escalation techniques should always be used to try to avoid the need to use restraint.
- Use of restraint should be based on assessment of risk.
- Restraint should not be used to punish or with the intention of inflicting pain, suffering or humiliation.

### **Practice:**

- Only those staff who meet training regulation standards will be allowed to participate in restraint and restrictive intervention with students, unless there is a particular immediate and real risk of injury or harm to any person by staff not using a physical intervention to prevent this and protect the person, people or themselves.
- All interventions will be recorded and held centrally. Reporting staff will be expected to complete the electronic or paper record on the day of the incident.
- Restrictive physical interventions (number and use) are reviewed and analysed weekly within each academy, included in regular quality assurance monitoring meetings with Executive leaders and further interrogated at Academy Council level once per term
- As far as is reasonably possible, internal exclusion will be used for those infringements of the discipline system that cannot be dealt with by lesser sanctions.
- Suspension from an academy will take place only in accordance with Trust policy and procedure. Suspension should be used only where lesser sanctions have proved ineffective or the seriousness of the individual incident warrants it.
- Wherever possible, restorative practice should be used in the aftermath of a restraint and restrictive intervention.

## **Seclusion**

- HSAT academies may use seclusion (a non-disciplinary intervention which involves keeping a pupil confined to a place away from others and prevented from leaving) as a safety measure to protect others from harm when a pupil is experiencing high levels of emotional or behavioural dysregulation.
- Seclusion will not be implemented by staff through threat of punishment.
- The place to which the pupil is confined will be a safe space and not feel threatening or intimidating to the pupil.
- During any period of seclusion, the pupil will be supervised at all times.
- As soon as the immediate risk of harm has reduced, the pupil will be allowed to leave.
- All incidents involving the use of seclusion will be recorded and reported<sup>4</sup>

## **Behaviour and suspensions**

When considering suspension or permanent exclusion, leaders will consider whether mitigating factors linked to SEND, social disadvantage or other protected characteristics have contributed to the behaviour, and whether appropriate adjustments or interventions were in place.

The CEO and Statutory Principals retain the power to suspend pupils on disciplinary grounds. Any decision to suspend should be lawful (with respect to the legislation relating directly to suspensions and a school's wider legal duties, including the European Convention on Human Rights and the Equality Act 2010); rational, reasonable, fair and proportionate. Permanent exclusion should only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches of the Trust's Behaviour Policy, and where allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the academy.

If a pupil is permanently excluded, we will work with parents or carers and the local authority to arrange a place at an alternative educational setting as soon as possible so as to minimise any further breaks in education provision. Where the child in question is vulnerable, the academy will notify the local authority/social worker immediately and should work with the local authority to ensure that the child is found a place in another educational setting quickly. During any gap in provision, education providers, social workers, local authorities and other professionals will need to work together to ensure adequate and appropriate arrangements are in place to keep in touch with vulnerable children and young people.

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<sup>4</sup> Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools. April 2026