Behaviour Policy

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		Applicable Services:	Education
Contributors	Rob Arrowsmith		
Mandatory Policy	Yes		
Note	This policy must not be amended without prior approval of the Education Director		

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1. Supporting Documents

This policy should be read alongside our:

- Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (EDU.POL.020)
- Safeguarding Children in Education Policy (EDE.POL.002)
- Anti-Bullying Policy (EDU.POL.007)
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy (EDU.POL.012)
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy (EDU.POL.035)
- Mobile Phone Policy (EDU.POL.040)
- Online Safety Policy (EDU.POL.009)
- Attendance Policy (EDU.POL.005)
- SEND Policy (EDU.POL.022)

Related policies are held within RADAR in the School's policy folder.

2. Introduction

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Rivacre Brook is a special school. Many of our pupils have experienced disruption, trauma or exclusion from previous settings, and their behaviour is often the clearest way they tell us how they are feeling. At Rivacre Brook, we treat behaviour as communication, and we respond with warmth, structure and high expectations rather than blame.

This policy sets out how we promote positive behaviour, how we respond when behaviour falls short, and the standards every member of our community can expect. It is built on the belief that pupils behave well when they feel safe, understood and respected, and when the adults around them are calm, consistent and fair.

Our approach is grounded in Keys Connect, our relational and trauma-informed model. At Rivacre Brook, we build positive behaviour through strong relationships, a sense of belonging and a curriculum that engages every pupil.

3. Aim & Scope

This policy applies to all staff, pupils, parents and carers, and visitors at Rivacre Brook. It applies in school, on school activities and visits, on the journey to and from school, and to behaviour online or out of school where it affects the school community or another pupil. It aims to:-

- set clear, consistent and high expectations of behaviour which every pupil can understand and meet
- help pupils to develop self-regulation, responsibility and the social skills they need to thrive
- set out a fair, graduated and restorative response to behaviour that falls short of those expectations
- keep pupils and staff safe and make sure any response to behaviour is reasonable, proportionate and the least intrusive option
- meet our duties under the Independent School Standards and current statutory guidance

4. Abbreviations and Definitions

This policy uses the following terms:

- Behaviour curriculum: the routines, expectations and social and emotional skills we teach explicitly so that pupils know how to behave well.
- Restorative practice: a structured conversation that helps a pupil understand the impact of their behaviour, repair harm and put things right.
- Sanction: a reasonable and proportionate consequence applied in response to misbehaviour.
- Suspension and permanent exclusion: a formal decision to remove a pupil from school for a fixed period or permanently, dealt with under our separate Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy (EDU.POL.012).

5. Policy Content

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5.1 Principles and Approach

At Rivacre Brook, our practice is guided by these principles:

All behaviour is communication

We seek to understand the need behind the behaviour, including trauma, attachment, sensory and communication needs, before we respond.

Relationships come first

Warm, consistent and predictable relationships are the foundation of good behaviour. Expectations are high and they are the same for everyone, adjusted only where a pupil's needs make that fair. Responses are calm, consistent and the least intrusive that will keep everyone safe.

We repair rather than shame

We prefer natural and restorative consequences to punishment that isolates or humiliates.

We notice the positive

Strength-based language and genuine praise shape our daily interactions.

5.2 Behaviour in Practice

Behaviour expectations and the behaviour curriculum

At Rivacre Brook, we teach behaviour, we do not assume it. We set out clear, simple expectations and we teach the routines, language and social and emotional skills that help pupils meet them. Expectations are shared with pupils, staff and parents, and they apply across the whole school day.

Recognising and rewarding positive behaviour

We recognise positive behaviour far more often than we sanction. Praise, positive contact with home and our recognition systems reinforce the behaviour we want to see. The local detail of our recognition and reward systems is set out in the school-specific annex at Appendix A.

Responding to behaviour that falls short

Our response is graded, calm and consistent. We start with understanding and early intervention, we use de-escalation and time to regulate, and we follow up with a restorative conversation to repair harm. Sanctions are reasonable and proportionate, and we always consider a pupil's needs before we apply them.

A record is kept of the sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour, as required by paragraph 9 of the Independent School Standards. Sanctions are recorded on Arbor and reviewed by leaders to make sure they are fair and effective.

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Behaviour support plans

Where a pupil needs an individual approach, we put a behaviour support plan in place. The plan sets out the pupil's strengths, known triggers, proactive strategies and agreed responses, and it is written with the pupil, the family and relevant professionals and reviewed regularly. Schools may use a different name for this document, for example an individual education plan. A template can be found in Appendix B. Plans are held on Tutorshare.

Mobile phones and electronic devices

At Rivacre Brook, we are a mobile-phone-free environment by default. Pupils are not to use mobile phones or personal electronic devices during the school day, including during lessons, the time between lessons, breaktimes and lunchtime.

Where a pupil brings a phone or device to school, it is handed to designated staff at the start of the day, kept securely, and returned at the end of the day. Any agreed exception for a medical or special educational need is documented in the pupil's individual plan.

Misuse of a phone or device, including bullying, sharing inappropriate content or accessing harmful material, is treated seriously and dealt with under this policy and the Safeguarding and Online Safety policies (EDU.POL.009). Staff may search for and confiscate a phone in line with section 7.6 below. This approach reflects the Department for Education guidance on mobile phones in schools and the duty under the Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 to have regard to that guidance.

Searching, screening and confiscation

Staff authorised by the headteacher may search a pupil or their possessions where they have reasonable grounds to suspect the pupil has a prohibited item, in line with the Department for Education guidance on searching, screening and confiscation. Reasonable force may be used to search only for prohibited items such as knives, weapons, alcohol, illegal drugs or stolen items, never for an item identified only in the school rules. Where a search raises a safeguarding concern, the Designated Safeguarding Lead is informed without delay. Detailed search procedures are set out in our Searching, Screening and Confiscation Policy (EDU.POL.035).

Use of reasonable force and physical intervention

Physical intervention is always a last resort, used only to keep a pupil or others safe, and never as a punishment. How and when reasonable force may be used, the techniques staff are trained in, and how every incident is recorded and reported are set out in full in our Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (EDU.POL.020). The recording and reporting of seclusion and restraint, including the duties under Standards 16A and 32A, is dealt with in that policy and is not duplicated here.

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Restrictive practices will be regularly reviewed to ensure they remain lawful, necessary, proportionate and in the pupil's best interests.

Suspension and exclusion

Any decision to suspend or permanently exclude a pupil is taken by the headteacher under our Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy (EDU.POL.012). As an independent school we are not bound by the statutory exclusion process that applies to maintained schools and academies, but we have regard to the principles of fairness in the Department for Education Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance. Suspension and exclusion are never used to manage a pupil's needs in place of proper support.

Part-time timetables

At Rivacre Brook, a part-time timetable is never used as a behaviour management tool. A reduced timetable is only ever used as a short-term, planned measure to meet a pupil's medical or reintegration needs, agreed with parents and kept under review, in line with attendance guidance and our Attendance Policy (EDU.POL.005).

Behaviour beyond the school gate and online

We may respond to behaviour outside school, including online, where it affects another pupil, a member of staff or the reputation and safe running of the school. Online behaviour, including bullying through phones or social media, is dealt with under this policy alongside our Anti-Bullying and Online Safety policies (EDU.POL.009).

5.3 Recording, Monitoring and Reporting

Behaviour incidents and sanctions are recorded on Arbor (and RADAR if it involves a restrictive physical intervention), including a record of sanctions for serious misbehaviour as required by paragraph 9 of the Independent School Standards. Leaders analyse behaviour data to identify patterns across pupil groups, including pupils with SEND and other vulnerable pupils, and use it to target support and improve practice. Behaviour data and the impact of this policy are reported to the proprietor and governors on a regular cycle.

5.4 Equality and Inclusion

At Rivacre Brook, this policy is applied fairly and without discrimination, in line with the Equality Act 2010. Many of our pupils have special educational needs or disabilities, and we make reasonable adjustments so that expectations and responses are fair for every pupil. We monitor the impact of this policy on pupils with protected characteristics and adapt our practice to remove disadvantage. Any concern that this policy disadvantages a pupil or group should be raised with the headteacher.

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6. Responsibilities

6.1 Pupils

Follow the behaviour expectations and take part in setting and reviewing them. Reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others, and engage with restorative conversations and support plans.

6.2 Staff

Model warmth, curiosity and consistent boundaries, and build positive relationships with every pupil. Teach the behaviour curriculum and apply expectations and sanctions fairly and consistently. Use de-escalation and co-regulation, and record incidents accurately and promptly on Arbor.

6.3 Leadership

Set and uphold a positive behaviour culture and make sure expectations are applied consistently across the school. Make sure staff are trained and supported, and monitor behaviour data to improve practice. Decide on suspensions and exclusions under the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy (EDU.POL.012).

6.4 Governance

Hold leaders to account for the behaviour culture and review behaviour data and the impact of this policy.

6.5 Parents and carers

Work with the school to reinforce positive behaviour and engage with communication, support plans and reviews.

6.6 Named leads

The named lead for behaviour at Rivacre Brook is Pio Villar Sevillano, Deputy Head. The Designated Safeguarding Lead is Sally Connah.

7. Training Requirements

All staff receive induction and ongoing training in trauma-informed practice, the Keys Connect model and de-escalation. Staff who may need to use physical intervention are trained in an accredited approach, refreshed in line with that accreditation. Our positive handling training is set out in the Positive Handling and Physical Intervention Policy (EDU.POL.020). Training needs are reviewed at least annually and after any significant incident or change in guidance.

8. Equality Impact Statement

All policies will be developed and implemented in a manner that promotes equality, diversity, and inclusion, ensuring fair and equitable treatment for all individuals. Policies must align with relevant equality legislation and reflect the expectations and standards set by our regulatory bodies. They will demonstrate a commitment to eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity, and fostering an

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inclusive environment that respects and values the diverse needs, backgrounds, and experiences of those we support, as well as our workforce.

9. Sources of Information / References

This policy reflects current legislation and statutory guidance, including:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, Part 3, paragraph 9 (a written behaviour policy, implemented effectively, with a record kept of sanctions for serious misbehaviour)
- The Independent School Standards: Guidance for independent schools, Department for Education, April 2026 (paragraph 9, 3.19 to 3.23)
- Behaviour in Schools: advice for headteachers and school staff, Department for Education, February 2024
- The Children's Wellbeing and Schools Act 2026 (the duty to have regard to national guidance on the use of mobile phones in schools)
- Mobile phones in schools, Department for Education, 19 January 2026
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation: advice for schools, Department for Education, July 2022
- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025, and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026 from 1 September 2026
- The Equality Act 2010
- Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance, Department for Education, July 2026, to which we have regard as good practice

10. Version Control

This document can also be found in Radar. This policy is reviewed annually, or sooner if legislation or statutory guidance changes. The named owner for review at Rivacre Brook is the headteacher.

11. Appendices

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11.1 Appendix A: School-Specific Behaviour Annex

The headteacher completes this annex with the local detail that makes the policy true for this school. Everything in this annex is school personalisation. At Rivacre Brook School the following local arrangements apply:

- Our school values and how they shape behaviour: Our school values are FOCUS, F (Follow instructions first time), O (Organised and ready for learning), C (Communicate respectfully), U (Using strategies to complete tasks) and S (Sit up, listen and engage). Students get a 1 point per each of these values per lesson to the maximum of 50 a day.
- Our daily routines, including start of day, transitions and breaks: Our school starts at 9 in the morning and finishes at 2.30 pm in the afternoon. There is a morning break between 10.30 am and 10.40 am and a lunch break between 12.10 pm and 12.40 pm.
- Our recognition and reward systems:
    - Weekly reward system: Our reward system is divided in Gold (195+ points in a week), Silver (From 165 points to 195 points) and Bronze (less than 165 points). Students in Gold can choose to go out for a trip on Fridays afternoons. Students in Silver can have a chocolate bar or some sweets and students in bronze can get involved on the reward activities the school offers on site.
    - Term reward. Students can get until £5 per week to spend at the end of term. This is calculating using the FOCUS points they have gained in the term (250 points = £5).
    - Students can get an extra £5 per term if they follow the school uniform criteria.
- Key pastoral and behaviour support roles and how to refer to them:
    - Stacie Madine, Pastoral Lead.
    - Pio Villar Sevillano, Behaviour Lead.
- Local and specialist agencies we work with:
    - CYPMHS (formally CAMHS)
    - Local Authorities (CWAC, Halton, Wirral, Flint, Merseyside)
    - Youth Justice Service
    - Other counselling/support agencies such as MyCWA, MySPACE etc
    - Keys Group Clinical Team (Ed Psych, OT, SALT)
    - Keys Group Specialist Team (Sexualised Behaviours, Substance Misuse, Self-injurious behaviours)
    - PREVENT
    - School Nursing Service/Health Visitors
    - Educational Welfare Service
    - SEND Teams
    - Missing from Home teams
    - Virtual School

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11.2 Appendix B: Behaviour Support Plan Template

The behaviour support plan helps staff understand, anticipate and respond consistently to a pupil's behaviour. It is written with the pupil, the family and relevant professionals and reviewed regularly. Complete one row for each pupil.

Pupil Support Plan

NAME:					
Date of Birth:	Image	Pupil Support Plan			
Year 8		Class	Form Tutor	Date of Plan	Review Date	Plan Version
						1
SEN Area of Need		I would like you to know: •			I find these things difficult: •	
	Cognition and Learning					
	Communication and Interaction					
x	Social, Emotional and Mental Health					
	Sensory / Physical					
Summary of SEN Need						

It would support me if you could:	I will support myself by:

Additional support provided:	Future Aspirations:

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Risk Assessment

Risk Assessment

Name:		**Date of birth:**	
School:	Rivacre Brook School	**Date:**	
Author:			
Who contributed:			
Revision dates:	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.

1. RISK					
Risk Title:					
Residual Risk Level: (Complete at the end)	**Low**	**Med**	**High**		
Assessing residual risk: (After all risk control measures have been implemented)					
Likelihood score:		**Consequence score:**		**Residual risk score:**	
2. UNDERSTANDING THE RISK					
Risks to whom:					
Previous Occurrences / Historical Information:					
Hazards (potential source of danger):					
Triggers (something that happens before a particular event or situation):					
Indicators (sign or signal):					
Assessing presenting (inherent) risk: (Before any risk control measures have been implemented)					
Likelihood score:		**Consequence score:**		**Inherent risk score:**	

3. CONTROL MEASURES (Including clinical strategies where applicable)
Before:
During:
After:

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