

Behaviour Policy and Statement of Behaviour Principles

ISP Whitstable



Approved by:	Local Governing Body	Date: July 2025
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1. Aims

This behaviour policy links to other school policies and documents including:

- Special Educational Needs
- The Home-School Agreement
- Safeguarding and child protection policy
- Educational Visits Policy
- Attendance Policy

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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

- [Behaviour in Schools \(July 2022\)](#)
- [Searching, screening and confiscation advice for schools \(July 2022\)](#)
- [Suspension and Permanent Exclusion guidance \(July 2022\)](#)
- [The Equality Act 2010](#)
- [Use of reasonable force in schools](#)
- [Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school](#)
- The Independent School Regulations 2014
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2022)
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (DfE September 2021)
- Working Together to Safeguard Children (DfE 2018)
- The Children Act 1989
- The Children Act 2004
- Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006
- The Serious Crime Act 2015
- The Sexual Offences Act 2003
- The Protection of Children Act 1999
- The Human Rights Act 1998
- The Education Act 2002
- What to do if you are worried a child is being abused 2015
- Information Sharing Guide for Practitioners 2015
- The PREVENT Duty 2015

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

This behaviour policy is published on the School's website and copies are also available on request. These can be obtained from the school's main reception. All stakeholders have high expectations and encourage our children and staff to be outstanding and shine.

All adults have a corporate responsibility to providing a safe, happy and stimulating environment for all children in our care where good behaviour is the only acceptable behaviour. This is achieved through quality teaching, praise, reward and a system of upheld school values.

Our policy is based on the belief that:

- Good behaviour is not automatically learned but needs to be taught and supported by our school community, parents/foster parents and wider networks.
- Classroom behaviour can change and that we as a community can assist children to manage their behaviour more effectively.

This policy aims to:

- Provide a **consistent approach** to positive behaviour management
- **Define** what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour, including bullying and sexual harassment
- Outline **how children are expected to behave** through a therapeutic education approach
- Summarise the **roles and responsibilities** of different people in the school community with regards to behaviour management
- Outline our system of **rewards and sanctions**

3. Introduction

This Policy applies to:

- All those directly employed by ISP School, Whitstable who are in positions and roles that require them to interact with or work alongside or in proximity to the children receiving an education from us.
- All those indirectly employed by ISP School, Whitstable, by being commissioned and paid to undertake work alongside or in proximity to the children receiving an education from us (i.e. engaged in regulated activities)
- Others working in partnership with ISP School, Whitstable, in regulated or unregulated activities, whether paid or not, who work alongside or in proximity to the children in receiving an education from us.

Responsibilities: All employees, whether they have a "front-line" role directly engaged with the education of children (teachers, PEGs) or "ancillary" (e.g. maintenance workers, caretaker and administrator) are personally responsible for managing their own conduct in relation to all aspects of safeguarding and child protection. This includes actively modelling and investing in meaningful and considered relationships with children that work towards their best interests and promote their well-being at all times. Behaviour that is seen as challenging is managed and thought about under our therapeutic education curriculum, punitive or harsh reactions are universally discouraged: at all times respect, reciprocity and restorative approaches are centred.

However difficult it is for us as adults and professionals to accept, many of the children attending our school have previously been exposed to systematic abuse, sexual exploitation, deprivation and fear from a very young age and consequently they have grown up believing this to be the foundation of acceptable and 'normal' behaviour. Until we are able to help them learn and experience this not to be so, the potential remains for these children to seek out and engage in inappropriate and abusive activities, interactions, and relationships. This means that the establishment of positive relationships is beyond "important" but is truly vital - through attunement, kindness, resilience, humour and care adults and peers become the main therapeutic tool for the development of prosocial skills.

It is essential that the approach to working with challenging behaviour is matched to the individual child's level of understanding and ability to make use of the approach. This requires all adults to discuss and plan appropriate, helpful approaches to individual children. We promote ongoing dialogue within the school community of adults and children where current experiences are discussed and challenged and appropriate and fair sanctions are thought through together – the sanction should hold open a space for thinking, feeling and making things better, together.

Our underlying ethos is that children are most likely to adapt their behaviour positively when:

- Expectations are clear and achievable
- Children feel valued and cared for
- Children receive regular praise and positive feedback
- Children feel they are being successful
- Children receive consistent messages from adults, parents, carers and their wider networks
- Children feel listened to and understood

4. Child centred community

Central to the therapeutic education model practiced at ISP School, Whitstable, is the belief that an individual child can only have damage from their earliest years addressed in a setting that allows for relatedness to others. Our practice is based on Psychosocial Theory, influenced by Group Relations thinking, informed by the work of Klein, Winnicott, Bion, Bowlby, and Hinshelwood amongst others.

In this way, the model used at ISP School, Whitstable, resembles the Therapeutic Community Approach. The idea at the heart of the model is one of equality between people and of the capacity in each of us to help and heal each other and to contribute to each other's development. It emphasises the quality of communication between adults and children (and between the adults), and on the connections between the help provided to individuals and the overall task with the whole group. Therefore, the key areas we are constantly attempting to nurture in the children at ISP School, Whitstable (and the adults working with them) is the ability to be honest, open and reliable with each other, and willing to find ways to communicate difficulties and problems more effectively and to begin to take responsibility for their own actions, decisions and lives. It is our firm belief that our Therapeutic Curriculum based on the following five principles is a protective mechanism for keeping our children and young people safe both in school and over their journey to interdependence.

Attachment: Children and young people attending ISP School, Whitstable need to feel a healthy sense of belonging. They are encouraged to become full members of a group that values them and gives them something to value. This is a fundamental first step in the feeling of self-worth necessary for learning to begin and it also means that they will not accept being treated badly by others and will speak up for themselves, trusting others to hear them. They will begin to accept that a reliable adult can hear about unpleasant experiences without blaming or rejecting the child.

Containment: Safety is paramount for our children and young people. All children and young people have a need to experience an appropriate degree of consistency, predictability, and regularity in their daily lives, and it is this that promotes a child or young person's sense of being 'safe' and is a prerequisite for children and young people developing the ability to retain new facts and skills (i.e. 'learning'). Our children and young people have often had limited experience of this. When the child recognises what feeling safe is like they can begin to identify those things that were and are not safe and begin to want to protect themselves in healthy ways.

Communication: Children at ISP School, Whitstable, need to see that openness is important in moving forward and that the adults can work honestly and respectfully with everything they need to communicate. In school this means teaching socially appropriate communication is more successful when adults show they can understand and manage less positive communication.

Involvement: The children and young people attending ISP School, Whitstable, learn about "growing-up" by experiencing the interdependency of participation in individual and group learning. In school this means a number of different activities are planned each week to give new experiences at the right level for each child; these can be very small step achievements, but by finding value in them self-worth grows and the capacity to assert choice develops.

Agency: can be defined as the acquiring of skills, actions, medium, or means by which to accomplish things. As children and young people move through the school, they grow closer to taking control of their lives and learning post-16 and need to experience both success and failure to do so. This also means that as children and young people progress through the school, they are actively encouraged to take up roles and positions of increasing responsibility and authority through making and evaluating decisions made for themselves and for and with their peers. We strongly believe that this ethos, in partnership with the procedures detailed below, informs an environment where children learn to keep themselves safe, demand safety from others and in which adults are attuned to how to work safely and how to spot the earliest possible indicators that things are not safe. From a position of security children can begin to show the key attributes through which they will thrive and make a positive contribution– resilience, tolerance, empathy, personal responsibility and a sense of efficacy and self-worth

5. Guidance on working with challenging behaviour

We believe that children communicate their thoughts and feelings through their behaviour. We have a responsibility to try to understand what children are telling us even though this may not be immediately apparent; children will feel listened to even if our attempts to name the reasons why a behaviour is occurring is not quite right. Children often have a clear sense of what they 'need' which may be expressed as a 'want' which can leave others with difficult feelings. It is imperative to look beyond these feelings and try to connect with the underlying reasons why a child may be behaving in a particular way – this behaviour is often as a result of 'coping' strategies developed over time.

The combination of relationships, structure, routine, clear boundaries and opportunities for thinking together promotes the development of positive, healthy and safe ways of relating to others.

Thinking of ways we can work together to support our school community:

Anticipate and prevent –

Get to know each child well - a strong relationship built on trust and respect is one of the most effective preventative measures. Know each child's safeguarding risk profile and keep up to date with the content.

Involve the children – in decisions about their education, social and emotional wellbeing and outcomes – appropriate to their stage of development

Teach by example - model respect for the children and for each other in all our work and feel able to say sorry

Encourage age appropriate behaviour – notice and respond when children are being helpful or constructive, friendly or just appropriate and co-operative

Be consistent - all members of our school community should endeavour to hold the boundaries of consistency across the community

Be clear – children need to be aware of what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour and responsibilities. Issues often occur when expectations are unclear or unreasonable.

Praise and positively reinforce behaviour whenever possible – remember you generally 'get more of what you talk about.' Promote positive behaviour through feedback, Celebration

Assembly, certificates, Class Dojo's, and Individual rewards. Show genuine pride in and enjoyment alongside children when they achieve may be the best recognition.

So what about when things get tricky, what can we do?

No single approach or technique is helpful in all situations for all children. Pay attention to our individual children and what works for them, in the here and now. Use strategies in their Safeguarding Risk Profiles/Behaviour Support Plans.

Notice and be curious about the behaviour. Simply ignoring someone's communication will not calm things down.

Notice and be curious about feelings and emotions. Show you are willing and able to think about what's happening for them. Give their mind space in your mind.

Recognise the child's feelings – it may be unreasonable for the child to kick, bite, spit or scream but it is not unreasonable for them to feel cross or unhappy. Try to confirm the feeling with the child and help them through their tricky times to find acceptable ways to express their feelings.

Try and avoid head on conflict – try compromise, defuse the situation wherever you can to stop it escalating.

Use the opportunity for the child to find a better way - try and teach a more positive alternative to an unacceptable behaviour i.e. "let's do this" rather than "don't do that". Always aim to increase the child's own self-control, at least until they demonstrate that they have control.

Set clear, simple expectations they can achieve - STOP or CHANGE an activity. Be clear and confident. Explain simply:

Say "We need to stop [activity] because [reason]"

Say "You need to stop [behaviour] because [reason]"

Don't repeat the same words over and over.

Confidently problem-solve with the child - offer alternatives, make sure the child has a way out of the confrontation without losing face and make sure there are gains in getting out of the conflict.

Model PAUSING, REGULATING and THINKING. Do not rush into sanctions or decisions.

Say "I am going to think with other adults about this"

Say "We need to think about what has happened"

Make a distinction between the child and the behaviour - make it clear that you will go on caring for the child whatever he or she might do and recognise yourself that the behaviour is not really a personal affront to you.

If you have to use sanctions - make them **immediate, fair and reasonable** and try to ensure that the child understands why. If it does not make sense and means nothing to the child there is probably no point in doing it. Sanctions should support a child to learn to modify their behaviour and should not be used as a punishment.

Keep your own self-control - get help and do not be afraid to go away and hand over the situation to others if you feel you are losing your own self-control or simply to make things better for the child

Move confidently but calmly

Make simple clear statements to the child

Make sure your voice is quiet, firm and assured

It is often best to simply leave a situation; you don't need to have your say before you go away and doing so can prevent the next person being able to reach the child and help them regulate.

Reduce the threat of your presence - by sitting, kneeling or giving space for the child to move about.

Stay with the child – focus on being reassuring, offering comfort and security through being there with the child when distressed and out of control. This may mean staying close, speaking gently even if there is no reply. It may mean keeping a distance that the child can tolerate and allowing the child plenty of space. It may mean sitting quietly a little way away and simply being in the same space or area as the child. Don't try to sort things out in the heat of the moment – leave that for later when the child is regulated. Together you can agree what needs to happen next in order to resolve the entire situation.

When things become tricky, what does not help?

Don't take it personally or make it personal

Don't try and deal with situations, if you feel out of your depth – ask for help, ideas or advice

Be very aware of your body language and positioning so that it will not be seen as threatening and so that the child may have safe ways out of the situation

During the incident is not the time to be discussing any sanctions, this should wait until the situation is calm and all involved can discuss together

Be aware of language used in order to match the age and understanding of the child

Don't try to sort things out by bombarding the child with questions, loudly or harshly put – you will have your say but consider if this would be the right time

Don't use humour that belittles, shames or demeans the child or which they do not understand.

6. Guidance on the use of sanctions and boundaries to promote positive behaviour

Agreed sanctions are routinely used by all adults to promote appropriate behaviour and to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the adults caring for them and the wider community. Sanctions aim to help children accept responsibility for their actions and to undertake reparative and restorative action. A sanction should hold open a space for thinking, feeling and making things better.

Adults regularly review the use of sanctions for individual children and for groups to ensure that they are helping them to learn and become more responsible. **If a sanction is not appropriate or effective, it should not be used.**

Fixed sanctions may be adopted by class teams or the whole community, in relation to an individual child, a group or the whole community, for periods of time when this is needed to support and contain the children and the adults working with them. All sanctions are reviewed and there are no whole school fixed sanctions permanently in place.

Good Sanctions Practice:

Adults will always consider **behaviour as communication** and seek to understand what is happening to the child(ren) in the context of their history and stage of development.

Sanctions should:

- fit the inappropriate behaviour.

- be seen to be fair in the eyes of children and discussed with them so that they know clearly what sanctions are and are not permitted.
- not be seen as revenge or getting even.
- be for a limited period where applicable.
- be used with thought/consideration.
- be tailored to the individual.
- be discussed with the adults and school community.
- be applied as soon after the event as possible.
- be reviewed periodically.

Adults should aim to:

Clearly set out what a child needs to work on.

- Use words that focus on relationships:
 “We need to keep you safe; you can’t be out away from the school until you can keep you safe.” (rather than “You’re not going on a school trip!”)
 “When the adults and/or children feel less cross about you being on a computer, you can use one again” (rather than “You have a tech ban for a week!”).
- Clearly set out the expectation that adults and children need to work on this together.
- Be clear that moving on from a limit or sanction depends on judgements: when other people can see you are safe / calm / have made things better as best you can.
 “When I really feel you will be safe doing...” may be more frustrating for the child and for you but it makes more sense than “You are not doing X until Friday.”

Communication is key in making this approach work – information has to pass from adult to adult and throughout the school community so each person can make judgements.

Adults should notice and respond to lower level behaviours. It is not fair to sanction children because adults have been too slow to notice the children’s more moderate communications.

Poor Sanction Practice:

It is easy to set a sanction that simply stops the child doing things. This may make everybody feel safe, and may be necessary, but it does not support anybody to grow. In general a sanction that means people don’t need to struggle with difficult things is not a sanction that is very useful. A sanction that prohibits something for a set time has simply to be borne by the child and also the adults and the child group until it is over. This can be easier than working on things that are a challenge. Simply banning something is unlikely to help them to think, learn and make reparations. Often the practical reality is that there are necessary exceptions to broad bans etc. which make them confusing and tokenistic.

It is the school’s policy that **children will be included in any educational or planned activity outside of school if they are safe and able to do so** – these things are not withdrawn as part of a particular sanction.

Sanctions used at our school include:

Limited use of vehicles for educational activities following dangerous behaviour in a vehicle

Attend lunch and/or lunch time sessions to catch up on missed school work, or address issues of inappropriate behaviour in class

Not being allowed to use specific pieces of equipment following their misuse such as no computers until reparation completed, or not attending a sporting activity following inappropriate or dangerous behaviour

Attend a meeting following high levels of unacceptable or concerning behaviour. A meeting will be convened by the Head or Deputy Head or someone who has emotional distance from the child and who has not been directly impacted by the child's behaviour. The meeting will have a clear focus on setting expectations around a particular behaviour, relationship or challenging aspect of a child's daily routine – jointly agreeing a plan to support a change in behaviour. The meeting may be relatively firm in tone and present with clear authority but will aim to support change through clear expectations and appropriate author and not through intimidation. A child will be accompanied by a supporting adult (preferably parent or carer). This may be a stand-alone meeting or may be a part of a succession of meetings for the child to see the 'network' working together to support them.

Time away from the group or activity. Any time away from the group must be to support the child to regulate, to reflect on what has happened and to consider how they can rejoin their group safely and to make things better.

Circumstances where it may be appropriate for a child to spend some time away from the group may include:

- A child has become so unregulated they are placing themselves or others at risk
- A child has become physically or verbally aggressive, bullying, racist, homophobic towards another
- A child or a number of children are behaving in a way that is encouraging group disintegration and there is clear evidence to suggest that unless the child/children take some space separately the situation could become unsafe

School community approach (Class group) – The therapeutic community approach requires groups to be encouraged and supported to discuss the behaviours of other members of the community, its impact on the group, ways of resolving the conflict and what actions individuals need to take to restore relationships within the school community. This is not children imposing measures against each other, this is adults facilitating a group process while maintaining appropriate authority. It is part of the adult role for children to facilitate, moderate and if necessary direct the process.

ISP School, Whitstable prohibits the use of the following:

- Threats of unacceptable punishments
- Any verbal abuse intended to humiliate or degrade a child, their family or other important person
- Removal of curriculum entitlement for any reason other than health and safety
- Removal of rewards that have already been earned
- The whole community being sanctioned as the result of an individual child's behaviour

7. How we manage 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.

Ongoing work by a range of adults captures how the children in school perceive and understand bullying including work in community meetings, tutor time, PSHE, RHSE, one to one sessions and restorative justice meetings.

Bullying is the sustained and repeated use of aggression or intimidation with the intention of causing harm or distress to another person. Bullying can occur in the following ways:

The principals below underpin the specific work we do with each group in school

Bullying is, therefore:

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

Bullying can include:

Type of bullying	Definition
Emotional	Being unfriendly, intentionally excluding, tormenting
Physical	Intentionally hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Verbal – direct or indirect	Name-calling, extreme sarcasm, spreading rumours, or excessive teasing with the intent to cause another distress
Cyber bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites
Discriminatory or hate based bullying – this may include but is by no means limited to:	
Racial	Racial taunts, graffiti, gestures
Homophobic	Focusing on the issue of homosexuality with the intent of causing distress for another.
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching, upskirting.
Disability based	Mocking or highlighting impairment with the intent of causing distress for another
Bodyshaming	Highlighting body difference with a view to causing distress

Possible Signs and Symptoms of Bullying

A child may indicate by signs or behaviour that they are being bullied. Adults should be aware of these possible signs and should take positive actions to monitor the possibility that a child may be being bullied:

- Begs to be driven to school, frightened of walking to/from school, unwilling to go to school
- Doesn't want to go on school trips
- Begins truanting
- Feels ill in the morning
- Begins to do poorly in school work
- Clothes torn or books damaged
- Has dinner or other monies continually "lost", comes home starving (money / lunch stolen)
- Changes their usual routine
- Starts stuttering
- Becomes withdrawn, anxious or lacking in confidence
- Asks for money or starts stealing money (to pay bully)
- Cries themselves to sleep at night or has nightmares
- Has possessions go "missing"
- Has unexplained cuts or bruises
- Attempt or threatens suicide or runs away
- Becomes aggressive, disruptive or unreasonable
- Is bullying other children
- Stops eating
- Is frightened to say what is wrong
- Gives improbable excuses for any of the above

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

The Importance of Responding to Bullying

Bullying hurts. No one deserves to be bullied and everybody has the right to be treated with respect. Children who are bullying others need to be helped to learn different ways of behaving, and the consequences of bullying for themselves and others. Everyone involved with the care and welfare of the children attending ISP School, the children themselves, and all others that interact with them:

- Need to have an understanding of what bullying is.
- Need to know what the policy is on bullying and follow it when bullying is reported.
- Should know what to do if they feel they are being bullied.
- Should know that we take the issue of bullying seriously.
- Should be assured that they will be supported if and when bullying is reported.
- Need to know that bullying will not be tolerated.

Strategies to Deal with Bullying

Adults caring for the children learning at ISP School, Whitstable, must be constantly aware of bullying and approach the issue by being:

Responsive:

- Actively dealing with immediate or specific incidents or allegations of bullying
- Problem Solving: providing support and skills development for children
- Counselling
- Peer mediation
- Negotiation
- Conflict resolution
- Learning how to respond to harassment

- Community meetings

Preventative:

- Providing a positive social context for children's behaviour
- Effective learning in a positive socially just environment
- Personal and social development
- Jointly agreeing expectations
- Use of Anti Bullying Alliance and Training Hub
- Reading materials regarding bullying or being bullied; there are anti-bullying materials in school, including those designed by children and young people and these are referred to regularly in community meetings and in class groups.

If classroom and learning interventions and restorative systems do not impact on patterns of bullying behaviour and an appropriate external resource is not available then the Head Teacher must consider what other options are available.

ISP School, Whitstable, also promotes a restorative justice approach to incidents between those who can benefit from this model. This starts with our child led incident debrief which asks all young people to think about how their behaviour has impacted on others.

8. How we manage sexism and sexual harassment:

Sexual violence means rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching).

Sexual harassment means unwanted conduct of a sexual nature – such as sexual comments, sexual jokes or taunting, physical behaviour like interfering with clothes, or online harassment such as sexting.

We will denote the seriousness of the incidents and determine whether we

- Manage the incident internally
- Refer to early help
- Refer to children's social care
- Report to the police

Zero Tolerance

Our children will know that our meaning of zero tolerance of sexually inappropriate behaviour allows them to report 'lower-level' incidents without worrying about getting other children in trouble. Our response will always be:

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

We will explain that whilst we will not tolerate the behaviour, we will not demonise anyone. We will always support and listen to all children involved. We will ensure that the alleged perpetrator will be offered support enabling them to change their behaviours.

Different sanctions will be appropriate for different 'levels' of sexual harassment and sexist comments. It is impossible for us to map out perfectly which sanctions will be used for which behaviours, as context will impact how we handle each incident.

Sanctions we may consider

- A restorative justice meeting
- Discussion in Class community meeting
- A letter or phone call to parents/foster parents
- Community service, doing a task for the community
- Suspension - length dependent on incident

What sanction is appropriate

The response to each incident will be proportionate. For example, a 'lower-level' incident such as a sexist comment will be addressed through education, our curriculum and the way our school actively promotes respect.

We will balance the importance of safeguarding other children with the need to support, educate and protect the alleged perpetrator(s).

Consider:

- The age and developmental stage of the alleged perpetrator(s)
- The nature and frequency of the alleged incident(s)
- How to balance the sanction alongside education and safeguarding support (if necessary, these should take place at the same time)

We will only use suspension or exclusion from our school only in the most severe cases, for example if the police recommend we exclude a child after an incident of sexual assault. If we decide to exclude a child, the decision must be lawful, reasonable and fair.

Take the wishes of the victim(s) into account:

We will do all that we can to keep victims at a reasonable distance from the alleged perpetrator(s) while on the school premises (including during any before or after school-based activities) as set out on page 128 of KCSIE.

Some victims might prefer that the alleged perpetrator(s) move class, whereas others may prefer that they stay in their class but just not sitting next to them. For example, if a victim is afraid of how the friends of the alleged perpetrator(s) might react if their friend was removed from class, the victim might prefer to not be put in this situation.

We will listen to the victim(s), their wishes will inform our response, however we will make the final decision. It is imperative to the culture of our school that our children feel listened to and heard.

Culture of respect:

Due to a wider societal culture of victim blaming, children may be afraid of how reporting incidents of abuse and harassment reflects on them. At our school we are creating a culture and ethos of respect, tolerance, acceptance and diversity which makes it easier for children to call out incidents and harder for anyone to get away with sexist or inappropriate sexual behaviour.

Lower-level' incidents are far more frequent than severe incidents, and can underpin the problematic 'normalised' culture Ofsted refers to in its [review](#). At our school we have started to dismantle this by encouraging children to call out and report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they think it is.

Our children know that we will:

- Take their safety and wellbeing seriously
- Listen to them
- Act on their concerns
- Not tolerate or accept abuse

At our school we make it clear that reporting incidents benefits everyone and that by doing this it is supportive and protective to our whole school community, including:

- The victim(s): by stopping the problem and getting the help and support they need
- Other people: by preventing it happening to someone else
- The alleged perpetrator(s): catching problematic behaviour early can help them avoid criminal offences later in life

Promote appropriate sexual behaviours:

As well as focusing on what's inappropriate, we help our children to understand what good and healthy sexual behaviour means.

Our RHSE curriculum covers important areas such as:

- Consent
- What respectful behaviour looks like
- Body confidence and self-esteem
- Healthy relationships

The DfE's [statutory RSE guidance](#) outlines how our curriculum should now cover these issues through our [relationships and sex education \(RSE\)](#) or [relationships and health education \(RHE\)](#) provision. Our significant amount of work with children is tracked through our SMSC GridMaker system.

We show we are prepared to act, no matter how small the incident:

Calling out behaviour as it happens helps all our children understand what is and isn't OK.

If the incident is very 'low level' – for example, a child making a comment that adults have reason to believe they don't fully understand – it may be appropriate to explain why it wasn't OK and ask the child to apologise to the victim on the spot. Class Community Meetings are also used as a forum to discuss behaviours and seek solutions.

We use it as an opportunity to encourage a community discussion about appropriate and inappropriate language – ensuring gender inclusivity.

If children **apologise**, adults keep an eye out for any recurrence from that particular child. Incidents are recorded and tracked on our Behaviour Watch system and children's Safeguarding Risk Profiles are updated to reflect latest behaviours, these are shared with all adults and the child.

It is rare for our children to not engage in this process however if they were unable to engage we would consider escalating the incident to a more serious sanction.

We get parents/foster parents involved immediately:

When incidents are written they are sent to all parents/foster parents weekly – they are not 'just' written and left. No matter how 'low-level' – we let parents/foster parents know what their child has said or done, and that we would like them to talk about it as a family. This will help our community:

- Get the parents on board in discussing the behaviour
- Start an important conversation between the child and their parents about acceptable and unacceptable sexual behaviour
- Work towards a solution together

This can just be a quick phone call, before the incident is sent out, but it's important that it happens **immediately** and **every time** adults have concerns about their child's behaviour.

We offer support to the alleged perpetrator(s):

We gently but firmly condemn the behaviour, not the child.

We recognise that sometimes when children demonstrate harmful sexual behaviour (HSB) towards one another, it's because they're communicating their own experience of abuse.

We offer them a safe space to explain what may have happened to them, and to discuss how their actions weren't appropriate. We gently but firmly condemn the behaviour, not the child – otherwise they would not feel safe to open up about their own experiences.

We actively refer children to other services to support their behaviours including referrals to Early Help, Front Door, Child Centred Policing Team & CAMHS and other agencies.

We will refer to KCSIE September 2024 which contains more information about how to support the alleged perpetrator(s).

We consider outreach:

We use the services of our local PC Jordan badge number 15145 at Kent police 07970077490

In some circumstances, we may feel it's appropriate for a group of children who have committed similar offences to engage in an outreach programme where they can hear first-hand about the impact of behaviour such as theirs.

9. Absent without permission (AWOP)

If any adult notes that a child is missing, they must alert either the school administrator, Head Teacher or Deputy Head Teacher. The time should be noted and a timeline kept until the child is found and all actions taken noted therein.

If a child is missing beyond the period of time agreed with parents and carers, (including the local authority) as safe for them then the local police are contacted and home informed. The social worker is also notified. If the police initiate missing persons' proceedings and the social worker has not responded then the duty social work team for the authority must be informed via email or phone.

If the child runs from the school, adults should attempt to keep them in view and contact the school by phone.

If they have not taken a phone then, as soon as the situation is brought to the attention of the administration or management team, a school mobile phone should be provided to them if practical and safe. On their return the child is welcomed back into the school. This is vital in helping to promote in the child the sense of a level of trust that the adults really care about them, that the school is a caring, nurturing and concerned place to be, and that as an individual, they are valued and of worth. The child is offered food and a drink. An adult is identified to undertake this action and ensure that the child's needs are met. They are informed of the concern about them shared by the whole group, and of the need to discuss the absence, but that this can wait until they have settled back.

An attempt is made to ascertain whether the child has sustained any injury, assault (physical &/or sexual) or other event requiring immediate attention, whilst being absent without permission. If so, they are given immediate access to resources appropriate to their needs. The police are notified of the return as are social workers and other significant adults. If the child is returned by the police, information regarding where the child was found, whom they were with and any other relevant details are sought from the attending officers.

If a period of missing extends beyond the end of the school day the Head Teacher, or Deputy Head Teacher must ensure the situation is fully handed over to someone else to manage and records are kept and updated appropriately for inclusion on the school's Behaviour Watch system. Situations of frequent or persistent absences without permission may be considered to constitute a breakdown of placement. The Head Teacher may initiate a network meeting to raise concerns and, in some circumstances, this may lead to a discussions regarding ending of placement.

10. Roles and responsibilities

The Governing Body

The governing body is responsible for monitoring this behaviour policy's effectiveness and holding the Head Teacher to account for its implementation.

The Head Teacher

The Head Teacher is responsible for reviewing and approving this behaviour policy. The Head Teacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that adults deal effectively with behaviour, and will monitor how adults implement this policy to ensure rewards and sanctions are applied consistently

School adults

Adults are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently
- Modelling positive behaviour

- Providing a personalised approach to the specific needs of individual children
- Recording behaviour incidents
- The senior leadership team will support adults in responding to behaviour incidents.

Parents

Parents/foster parents are expected to:

- Support their child in adhering to the children's code of conduct
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour
- Discuss any behavioural concerns with the school enabling positive joint support to occur
- Know they are welcome to telephone, email or visit the school at any time – we value our joint working relationships and know that communication is the key to their child's success.

11. Children's code of conduct

At ISP School we believe all children have responsibility for their own actions. Supporting our children to make choices and to understand that they must take responsibility for their own actions is an important part of their learning. It supports the school's aim that our children leave ISP school respectful of, and as positive contributors to, their communities and their peers.

At ISP School children are responsible for ensuring that they understand the school's rules, behave appropriately and fully understand the consequences and rewards resulting from the decisions and actions they take.

School rules and Codes of Conduct are clearly communicated and displayed, and all children are asked to sign the School's Home School Agreement alongside their parents/foster parents.

Children are expected to:

- Show respect to the school community
- In class, ensure that their behaviour does not disrupt the learning of others
- Move quietly around the school
- Treat the school buildings and school property with respect
- Wear the correct uniform at all times
- Share worries and concerns
- Refrain from behaving in a way that brings the school into disrepute, including when outside school

12. Malicious allegations

Where a child makes an accusation against a member of staff and that accusation is shown to have been malicious, the Head Teacher will work in accordance with this policy to determine the best outcome.

Please refer to our safeguarding policy/statement of procedures for dealing with allegations of abuse against staff/adults for more information on responding to allegations of abuse.

The Head Teacher will also consider the pastoral needs of staff/adults accused of misconduct.

Unfounded malicious allegations against a member of staff/adults:

Where a child makes an unfounded malicious allegation against an adult, the child may well be suspended dependent on circumstance. Internal support in a one to one situation may be considered where appropriate. The terms of the suspension will depend on the nature and seriousness of the allegation. Some children may also need to be referred to an Educational Psychologist for assessment. This does not affect the school's responsibilities in relation to safeguarding.

Allegations of abuse must be taken seriously, and will be dealt with quickly in a fair and consistent way that provides effective protection for the child and supports the person who is the subject of the allegation. Every effort will be made to maintain confidentiality and guard against unwanted publicity while an allegation is being investigated.

Suspension will not be used as an automatic response when an allegation has been reported.

13. Use of restraint including reasonable force

It should always be remembered that when working with challenging behaviour, interventions of any nature should be in the best interest of the child, reasonable, proportionate and necessary.

At ISP School, Whitstable, we use the PRICE system of positive behaviour management. Our school follows the approach, guidance and ethos of PRICE in all matters related to the use of restraint and reasonable force.

If a child is presenting risk to themselves or others or causing serious damage to property, physical interventions that are reasonable, necessary, proportionate and in the best interest of the child may be required. This should be carried out with the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time adults should remain with the child following a physical intervention to avoid the child looping back into crisis.

Restraint or reasonable force should not be used as such a regular feature of practice that it comes to be seen by children as an everyday method of control and one which they will come to demand/expect before accepting adult authority.

Children who have suffered serious physical and/or sexual abuse can react powerfully to well-intentioned efforts of reasonable force or restraint, misperceiving such actions as the prelude to further assault of either type. This is not to say that control by reasonable force or restraint should be avoided entirely, rather it indicates that this must be kept in mind by the adult who must be prepared to reassure a child of intention. It also confirms that children should be involved in discussing and identifying behaviours that might require adult intervention and reasonable force or restraint. This should occur at calm times, both prior to the need for any such intervention and as part of talking through occasions of reasonable force and / or restraint.

Adults using restraint must remember:

- To ensure that one person takes the lead in talking to the child during the intervention, this can avoid creating further confusion
- After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this needs recording on the report.
- Incidents of reasonable force or restraint are recorded within 24 hours using the Behaviour Watch system (on-line recording system)
- To ensure that any appropriate amendments are made to the child's Safeguarding Risk profile.

- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used by adults who are trained in the use of PRICE or if reasonable force is required in an unforeseeable event.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used if a child is in danger of hurting her/himself, yourself or another person, causing serious damage to property or, only in school, seriously disrupting other children.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used if other forms of intervention have been tried and preventative steps are unsuccessful. These may include talking, comforting, calming, withdrawing yourself from the situation.
- Remember reasonable force / restraint are defensive protective techniques. They should never be used offensively.
- Reasonable force / restraint should only be used until the child is calming down (no longer than absolutely necessary).
- The event must be recorded afterwards. Time should be allowed to calm and to evaluate the incident. Any use of reasonable force must be recorded within 24 hours.
- Children must be offered an advocate and first aid regardless of whether adults feel this is needed or not.

14. Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Prioritising Safeguarding:

We have a duty of care to safeguard all the children in our care. This means we will balance

- The need to safeguard all children by confiscating harmful, illegal, or disruptive items
- The safeguarding needs and wellbeing of children suspected of possessing these items

Act in accordance with children's rights and 'best interests':

Keeping Children Safe in Education sets out our statutory duties to make sure that we make decisions based on the **best interests of the child**. This applies to decisions to search children and confiscate items.

We will ensure that all our adults

- Have read our school policies on child protection, staff code of conduct and behaviour
- Have read Keeping Children Safe in Education in its entirety
- Know how to make referrals to children's social care
- Know how to identify signs of abuse and neglect, and about behaviours linked to issues that can put children in danger (such as drug use)
- Can identify children who might need early help, including children found in possession of prohibited items

The [United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child](#), establishes that:

- The 'best interests' of the child should be the primary consideration in all actions that bodies, such as schools, take (article 3)
- All children have the right to privacy, and not to be subject to arbitrary attacks to their reputation (article 16)

We would only search a child if we had good reason to, however we will consider that, for the child, it could infringe upon their wellbeing and rights in several different ways. For example:

- Physical loss of privacy when clothes, bags, or possessions are searched
- Children feeling that they are being monitored arbitrarily or without reason
- The impact to a child's dignity or reputation if they are unduly searched or suspected of possessing prohibited items

Under article 8 of the European Convention on Human Rights, our children have a right to expect a reasonable level of personal privacy. Any 'interference' with this right by our school must be **justified and proportionate**, so our staff will need to be sure they can demonstrate this if needed. We will keep records of any searches.

Treat confiscations as a safeguarding issue:

As you know, children in possession of drugs, alcohol or weapons should be considered vulnerable and at risk of exploitation. KCSiE highlights the need to be alert to the potential risks of children who are:

- Showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour
- In challenging family circumstances, such as drug and alcohol misuse
- Misusing drugs or alcohol themselves

If searching a child leads to the discovery of a prohibited item, we will escalate it as a safeguarding issue alongside a behavioural or criminal one, to make sure the child is given the help and protection they might need.

Be vigilant of bias:

We will be aware of, and encourage adults to be especially vigilant about, possible biases affecting decisions to carry out or escalate searches. The Safeguarding Review into the Child Q case found that "racism (whether deliberate or not) was likely to have been an influencing factor in the decision to undertake a strip-search".

Biases may be in relation to any differentiating characteristics, such as a child's:

- Race or religion
- Socio-economic status
- Friendship group

Importantly, if groups of our children feel that they are being unfairly targeted, searched or suspected of wrongdoing for any reason, trust between children and adults will be damaged. This will undermine our safeguarding and behaviour practices, so it's worth being especially mindful and avoid searches wherever possible.

Who can search?

Any adult can ask a child to turn out their pockets or to let us look in their bag, and if the child agrees, we can go ahead. At our school we will be sensitive to the fact that the ability to give consent may be influenced by the child's age or other factors.

If we suspect the child has a prohibited item in their possession and they refuse a search, we can apply an appropriate sanction.

What we class as a banned item are listed below:

Prohibited items should include:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article that a school adult reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to:
 - Commit an offence
 - Cause personal injury or damage to property

Searches by the Police:

If efforts to persuade a child to hand over a suspected illegal substance, stolen property etc have failed (including contact with the parents if at all possible) then the police should be called to undertake the search.

If police wish to conduct an intimate search, then the police must comply with the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984; and Code A 2015 and Code C 2019 of the PACE code of practice. If the correct procedures are not followed then the search would be unlawful.

The school will always ask the police and the child for an appropriate adult to be present in the search. Unless otherwise advised by the police, the school will also contact the child's parents/foster parents to inform them of the search.

Carrying out searches:

Clothing – Under no circumstances can a school adult ask a child to remove any clothing other than outer clothing (i.e. clothing not worn next to the skin or immediately over underwear). Intimate searches can only be conducted by a person with more extensive powers (e.g. a police officer). See Searches by the Police above.

Lockers, desks and bags - These can only be searched in the presence of the child and another member of staff, except if:

- There's a risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if they don't conduct the search immediately, and
- It isn't reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff

Our school may also allocate lockers and desks to children on the condition that they consent to having these searched for any item whether or not they're present.

Use of force

The law states: Staff can use reasonable force when conducting a search for prohibited items. Wherever possible our school does not advocate use of force to search a child.

Confiscation and handling prohibited items:

Any prohibited items found in a child's possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to children. These items may be returned to children after discussion with senior leaders and parents/foster parents, if appropriate. In most cases, the item will be

stored in a locked cupboard and the parents/foster parents will be invited to school to pick this up. Should the item be potentially illegal or part of a potential criminal investigation, it will be stored in a locked cupboard and the police informed for them to pick up.

The list below shows how each item will be handled:

- Weapons or items which are evidence of an offence – store in a locked cupboard and call the police and ask that they come to school to pick these up.
- Alcohol, tobacco and cigarette papers, fireworks, vapes, anxiety pens - Either retain or dispose of these, but don't return them to the child.
- Controlled substances - In most cases these will be stored in a locked cupboard and police called and asked to come to school to pick these up. However, we can dispose of them if we think there's a good reason to do so taking into account the relevant circumstances and using our professional judgement to determine whether we can safely dispose of the item. If we are not sure of the legal status of a substance but we have reason to believe it may be a controlled drug, we will treat it as such.
- Stolen items - If the items are valuable or illegal - store in a locked cupboard and call the police and ask that they come to school to pick these up.
- Low value item – these may be returned to the owner. If the item is on the prohibited list and is not covered by the items above we will ask the parent/carers to collect this from school.
- Pornographic images – If we have reasonable grounds to suspect that their possession constitutes a specific offence (i.e. it is extreme or child pornography) we will follow the Child Protection Policy and store the item in a locked cupboard, call the police and ask that they come to school to pick these up.
- Mobile phone – this will be stored with our administrator: Danielle Bream and returned to the child after school. Unless other arrangements have been made.

Electronic devices:

If during a search we find an electronic device, we may examine its data or files – and delete files – if we have a good reason to do so. A 'good reason' to examine devices or erase data or files is if we reasonably suspect that data or files on the device in question have been, or could be, used to:

- Cause harm
- Disrupt teaching
- Break the school rules
- Evidence related to an offence

If we have reason to believe that the device contains evidence in relation to an offence, we will give the device to the police as soon as reasonably practicable.

If we search the device and find data or files related to the offence, we will not delete these before handing the device over.

Reporting searches to parents/foster parents:

We will contact parents/foster parents about the search as soon as possible and without delay (within the same day). We will inform the parent/carers if any of the following are found or if the police have been contacted:

- Alcohol

- Illegal drugs
- Potentially harmful substances

Searching and screening pupils is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#).

15. Child support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent children with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to challenging behaviour may be differentiated to cater to the needs of individual children.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist teachers, an educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

When acute needs are identified in a child, we will liaise with external agencies and plan support programmes for that child. We will work with parents/foster parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis.

16. Managing a child's transition:

To ensure a smooth transition to the next year, children may have transition sessions with their new teacher(s). In addition, adults will hold transition meetings. Transitions may occur part way through an academic year – transitions are community led to ensure any move is the right move for individual children.

To ensure behaviour is continually monitored and the right support is in place, information related to child behaviour issues may be transferred to relevant adults at the start of the term or year. Information on behaviour will also be shared with new settings for those children transferring to other schools.

17. Adult support and development:

Our adults are provided with training on managing behaviour, including proper use of restraint, as part of their induction process. All adults are trained in de-escalation techniques and follow the PRICE (Protecting Rights in a Caring Environment) guidelines.

Behaviour management will form part of continuing professional development.

All adults meet in the morning to discuss the day ahead and a debrief at the end of the day as well as a Reflective Practice session weekly. Adults find this approach very supportive. Additionally, all adults have regular opportunities to work through the 'tricky' bits with members of the Leadership team who offer a daily 'Supervision Surgery' session.

SLT has a firm open door policy which is recognised by the school community as being supportive.

Adults views are captured termly in our end of year adult surveys.

Adult training and professional development is monitored through the Head Teacher.

18. Monitoring arrangements

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the Head Teacher and Governing Body annually or sooner as needs and/or guidance change.

19. Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is closely linked to the Safeguarding policy which is underpinned by the Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 legislation.

Please read in conjunction with Behaviour Curriculum 2025

Appendix 1: Written statement of behaviour principles

Every child understands they have the right to feel safe, valued and respected, and learn free from the disruption of others

All children, adults and visitors are free from any form of discrimination

Adults and volunteers set an excellent example to children at all times

Rewards, sanctions, and reasonable force are used consistently by adults, in line with the behaviour policy

The behaviour policy is understood by children and adults

Suspensions will only be used as an absolute last resort, Appendix 2 outlines the processes involved in suspensions and permanent exclusions

Children are helped to take responsibility for their actions

Families are involved in behaviour incidents to foster good relationships between the school and children's home life

A transparent approach to sharing of information is paramount – all incidents and accidents are sent to children's parents/foster parents and social workers weekly

The governing body also emphasises that violence or threatening behaviour will not be tolerated in any circumstances.

Appendix 2: Suspension

The Government supports Head Teachers in using suspension as a sanction where it is warranted. At ISP School suspension will be avoided wherever possible with early intervention made to identify and address underlying causes of behaviour as soon as possible.

However:

Our school will, wherever possible, not use temporary or permanent suspension as a behaviour management measure. Children who are in need of therapeutic education and care have in the past often broken-down multiple school placements through behaviour that has been deemed as unacceptable. A policy of suspension runs the risk that the emotional difficulties underlying this behaviour, and the intrinsic communications being conveyed by the behaviour, are not given due consideration.

Our children may have used a cycle of disruption and suspension to withdraw from the intense and difficult challenge of being educated. Therefore, we believe suspensions are totally non-therapeutic as they can replicate and deepen unhealthy feelings and experiences of rejection and abandonment.

Adults at our school will, wherever possible, support children to stay in school when their behaviour becomes challenging, using a range of strategies to keep everyone safe and to maintain a suitable learning environment for others. Close liaison between home and school may result in a child having a brief 'cooling-off' period/wellbeing day (s).

Part of the decision making around cooling off/wellbeing days will be made in consultation with the wider network that is our governing body and mainly our Director of Education; for example, if extremes of behaviour or incidents are causing a disruption to the learning of others, then home and school may plan for a supported reintegration, which may involve additional support meetings with the network. If challenging behaviour has reached the threshold where the police have been asked to intervene there may be a period out of school with the main purpose being to allow parent(s)/carers/legal guardians or other agencies to support our child(ren) in understanding the processes they are involved in.

During this period, essential plans for reconciliation and reparation will be made and implemented, to facilitate the child's return to school. The school will use a reintegration meeting to focus on restorative justice and address challenging interpersonal behaviours.

There is some behaviour that may require a professionals' meeting to be called to discuss and determine together the best ways to support the school placement, or to review whether the placement continues to be in the best interest of all involved. These may include:

- An unacceptable risk to adults or other children within the school
- Fire setting
- Persistent absconding resulting in high-risk situations.
- Disagreement in the network around the child, including an irretrievable breakdown in the relationship between home and school, or the school and parent(s)/carers/legal guardian/placing authority

If a child is in need of frequent cooling off /well-being days due to persistent damage and/or harm (potential or actual) to others, the Head teacher will discuss the situation with the governing body in order to decide whether an early review is required.

Legislation states:

The Head Teacher decides whether to suspend a child, for an amount of time up to five days or permanently, taking into account all the circumstances, the evidence available and the need to balance the interests of the child against those of the whole school community.

The Head Teacher will take account of any contributing factors identified after an incident serious unsafe behaviours occurring. For example: if a child has suffered bereavement, has mental health issues or has been subject to bullying.

A suspension will be determined in conjunction with the child, parents/foster parents and Social Worker. Children will share their views of events, these will be taken into account before deciding whether to suspend or exclude. Children will be offered the opportunity to express their views with the support of an advocate (such as parent/carer or social worker), if needed, unless their age or understanding mean it's not appropriate to do so. Where children do get the opportunity to express themselves, they will also be informed of how their views will be taken into consideration in reaching a decision. The Head Teacher will be responsible for notifying parents/foster parents, the governing body, the child's social worker and the Local Authority. The Head Teacher will notify the East Sussex Local Authority by completing form EXNO1.

Schools are being encouraged to set and mark work for children in the first five days following a suspension – this is not new guidance however, updated guidance states we are able to use online pathways such as Oak National Academy to meet this need. At ISP School, Whitstable we will provide online literacy work and subject specific work related to the area of need through suspension.

For children who are looked after or have a social worker, alternative provision should be considered from day one however for our very complex children this is unlikely to be possible therefore our school will take 'reasonable steps to set and mark work for pupils' and online pathways will be used.

However, as above our therapeutic education and care model will endeavour to avoid replicating models of suspension that have failed in all other education settings, wherever possible.

Cancelling suspensions/exclusions:

The DfE has made the rules around cancelling suspensions/exclusions clearer, which should go further to help protect children from off-rolling.

The Head Teacher can now cancel exclusions that have **not started yet**, whereas previously they could only cancel suspensions/exclusions that had already begun. (This is all provided that the governing board has not yet met to consider whether the child should be reinstated).

Notify those involved of a cancelled suspension/exclusion:

When an exclusion is cancelled, as Head Teacher, you must notify without delay:

- Parents/foster parents; or the pupil (if they're 18 or older)
- The governing board
- The local authority (LA)
- The pupil's social worker (where relevant)
- The VSH (where relevant)

The Head Teacher must provide all parties with the reason for cancellation.

Offer parents/foster parents the opportunity to meet with you as Head Teacher without delay, to discuss the circumstances that led to the cancellation.

Any days out of school will count as a suspension:

Bear in mind that any days out of school, before a cancelled suspension/exclusion, will count towards the maximum of 45 school days a child can be suspended in any school year.

Note that a permanent exclusion **can't** be cancelled if a child has already been suspended for more than 45 days in a school year.

Pupils should be reintegrated without delay:

Offer the same support to children whose suspensions/exclusion has been cancelled, as you would to a child who has been suspended on their return to school.

Governing boards don't need to meet or consider representations:

In the case of a cancelled suspension/exclusion, the board's duty to consider reinstatement stops so it doesn't need to meet. Read more about these changes in paragraphs 13 and 14 of the new guidance.

Off rolling and unlawful exclusions:

We value the education of and for our children therefore we will not state that a child cannot attend school without following statutory procedures.

We will not on any occasion use undue influence over a parent/carer to remove their child from our school under the threat of us ending the child's placement at our school or encourage them to choose elective home education or to find another school place for their child.

Suspending children with social workers:

We will balance, carefully, the competing needs when faced with the possibility of suspending or excluding a child under the care of a social worker as the child will often have known safeguarding risks at home or in the community, and our school is known as the protective factor **but** we also acknowledge we have a duty to provide a safe and calm environment for all of our children and adults.

We will manage these competing interests by:

- Involving the child's social worker, our DSL/DDSL's and the child's parents/foster parents as early as possible in any issues that may lead to a suspension.
- If the child is known as previously being a child looked after, we will communicate with their parents and our Support Teacher/SENDSCO.
- If the child is looked after the Support Teacher will ensure the virtual school communicated with us too.

Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)/Deputy DSL role in suspensions

In cases involving child on child abuse a safeguarding investigation may run parallel to any consideration to suspend. We will ensure we remain focussed on our duties to:

- Safeguard and promote the welfare of our children
- Provide a suitable education

In cases where a child is permanently excluded/notice is served on the placement the Designated Safeguarding Lead will transfer the child's child-protection file to the child's new school:

- Within five days for an in-year transfer or
- Within the first five days of a new term

We will ensure the child protection file is transferred separately from the child's main school file, the files will be sent securely, we will always request confirmation of receipt.

If our school accepts an excluded child we will ensure that school adults are aware of the file and it is read by all relevant adults.

Role of Virtual School Head (VSH) and Social Worker (SW) in suspensions

In addition to being informed of any suspensions of children under their care, the Virtual School Head and Social Worker **MUST** be invited to participate in any governing board meetings and independent review panels. Both the VSH and SW will understand a child's background and be able to provide important information about the child's lived experiences and welfare. Both should attend meetings to review exclusions/suspensions where possible, however can request to join a meeting remotely.

Successfully reintegrating children after suspension

The DfE has significantly updated its guidance on how to reintegrate a child following suspension or off site provision:

- We will provide a reintegration strategy devised for the individual need of the child involved and which offers the child a fresh start and supports them to re-engage in our community ethos
- We will communicate this clearly at a reintegration meeting, preferably with parents/foster parents present – as an independent specialist provision we would expect our children to be supported to attend and engage with this process before returning to school
- Where necessary, we will work with multi-agency partners
- We will not use a part time timetable for behaviour management however where one is appropriate it will be for the shortest time possible and reviewed regularly
- We will consider a range of approaches to support the child's successful integration based on their individual need

Suspension: A child may be suspended for one or more fixed periods (up to a maximum of 45 school days in a single academic year). The behaviour of children outside school can also be considered as grounds for suspension. A suspension does not have to be for a continuous period. In exceptional cases, usually where further evidence has come to light, a suspension may be extended or converted to a permanent exclusion where this is justified. Permanent exclusion will only be used as a last resort, in response to a serious breach, or persistent breaches, of the school's behaviour policy; and where allowing the child to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the child or others in the school.

Parents' right to appeal permanent exclusion: in most cases parents will have the right to make representations to the local governing body.

The Local Authority has a duty to provide suitable full-time education from the sixth school day of a permanent exclusion. Parents must take responsibility for their child if they are excluded (fixed term or permanently) from school, and must ensure that they are not in a public place without good reason during school hours within the first five school days of any exclusion.

The role of our Governing Body:

Previously our governing body

- Had to consider parent's representations if requested, but
- Did not have to have a meeting to do so and
- Could not direct the Head Teacher to reinstate the child

Now our governing body:

- Still must consider any representations that are made by parents/foster parents but

- There is no deadline for arranging a meeting though-
- If the meeting occurs, it should be 'within a reasonable amount of time' and
- In the absence of any representations from parents/foster parents, our governing board 'can consider reinstatement on their own.'
- The Head Teacher must, without delay, notify the governing board of:
Any permanent exclusion (including there a suspension is followed by a decision to permanently exclude the pupil);
Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the child being suspended or permanently excluded for a total of more than five school days (or more than ten lunchtimes) in a term; and
Any suspension or permanent exclusion which would result in the pupil missing a public examination or national test.
The governing board has a duty to consider parents' representations about a suspension or permanent exclusion.
- Confirm that all participants have access to the technology which allow them to: hear, speak, see, and be seen when attending remotely. If technical issues occur rearrange to meet in person.

Version No.	Amendments	Date
1		22 July 2021
2	Added more detail	January 2022
3	Re-written to encompass updated guidance on Suspensions and Permanent Exclusion, Searching, Screening and Confiscation and updated Behaviour in Schools guidance. Far more emphasis on therapeutic nature of managing behaviour	27 July 2022
4	Amended to take into account amendments to Suspension and Exclusion Guidance September 2023	26 July 2023
5	Amended to fit Whitstable school	Sept 2024
6	Reviewed and updated	July 2025