



The Bayleaf Hub

Promoting Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy

2025 – 2026



**THE BAYLEAF HUB
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**THE BAYLEAF HUB
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Reviewed by:	Kelly Pope
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Curiosity – Courage - Community

We believe in providing trauma-informed, therapeutic care. Where children and young people feel safe, valued and understood. We nurture Trust, emotional growth and resilience compassionate, consistent and relationship-led support.

C = *Curiosity and a bias for action fuel our innovation.*

A = *Accountability to those we serve help us deliver results.*

R = *Respect and Integrity are demonstrated in our actions.*

E = *Engaged and passionate employees define our company.*

Introduction

We place the safety and well-being of the children and young people we educate and support as its highest priority. We are committed to meeting their individual needs and aim to create a culture where children and young people flourish and enjoy their education. Our approach is informed by our clinical well-being strategies which are based on the most current and up to date research.

The aim of this policy is to promote positive behaviour through a supportive and consistent approach that is based on an understanding of our children and young people's needs. The Bayleaf Hub is a specialist provision which offers support for children and young people with multiple, complex co-occurring needs. The school has a trauma-informed, needs-led approach that encourages positive behaviour by proactively recognising and flexibly supporting our pupils' holistic individual needs. Team members are trained to apply this approach in practice at all times and support our children and young people consistently and fairly, developing positive, respectful relationships with them.

Behaviour is determined by the inner experience of thoughts, feelings, beliefs, wishes and desires. Simply put, how a person thinks and feels determines how they behave.

Developmental trauma can negatively impact on a child's views about themselves, others, and the world; and can lead to pervasive feelings of mistrust, anxiety and fear. Trauma impacts on the child's ability to emotionally regulate, to reflect, solve problems, and to form emotionally connected relationships with others. Consequently, the child may have complex and challenging behaviour. At The Bayleaf Hub, we promote an emotional connection between the children and the adults, using behavioural modification techniques (teaching of pro-social behaviours with warmth, appropriate limits and boundaries).



Legal Framework and Guidance

This policy complies with all relevant regulations and other legislation as detailed, including:

- The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- The Independent School Standards (Guidance for independent schools- updated April 2019)
- Equality Act (2010)
- Education Act (2011)
- Children and Families Act 2014
- Positive environments where children can flourish, Ofsted Guidance (2021)
- Behaviour and Discipline in Schools DFE Guidance (2016)
- Behaviour in Schools: A guide for Head Teachers and School Staff (2024)
- Use of reasonable Force – advice for school leaders, staff and governing bodies (2025)
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2025
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (July 2022)

Our pupils have lived experience of trauma and complex needs. Behaviour in Schools: A guide for Head Teachers and School Staff (2024) is clear that good behaviour in educational settings is central to a good education, with settings providing a calm, safe and supportive environment which pupils want to attend and where they can learn and thrive.

Policy Framework

The Bayleaf Hub is committed to reducing the use of restraint and restrictive practices and supporting preventative practices. Our school is underpinned by our needs-led and trauma-informed approach.

This policy should be read alongside the following:

- Child Protection Policy
- Anti-bullying Policy
- Child-on-Child Policy
- Suspension and Exclusions Policy
- Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy
- Complaints Policy



Underlying Principles

This policy is underpinned by the following principles:

- Playfulness – use of fun and humour;
- Acceptance – it is what it is;
- Curiosity – wondering about the inner experience of the child;
- Empathy – “I get it”;
- A focus on relationships;
- Connection before correction;
- Meet hidden as well as expressed needs; be gently challenging;
- Step aside from confrontation;
- Respond according to individual needs and developmental (rather than chronological) age;
- Respond with unconditional positive regard;
- Adults set the emotional tone;
- “Time in” (not out);
- Appropriate physical contact to regulate;
- Use descriptive praise;
- Approach the child at the toughest time, when you most want to walk away;
- Look after yourselves.

Purpose of this Policy

This policy aims to promote a move towards an evidence and person-centred, inclusive approach where our pupils are supported to experience a sense of belonging. The policy, practice and procedures aim to reflect and demonstrate the importance of the school’s commitment to promoting the entitlement of children and young people to the highest quality of education. This policy aims to promote an evidence based and inclusive approach where pupils are supported to learn effective ways of managing their emotions and behaviour to prepare for their future.

Policy Implementation

Everyone is expected and supported to treat one another with dignity, kindness and respect. We create a school environment which is predictable and comfortable. This policy can be implemented alongside Individual Behaviour Support Plans, which may identify a specific approach tailored to a pupil’s strengths and needs. When incidents of behavioural distress and emotional dysregulation occur, we respond promptly, predictably and with confidence to maintain a calm, safe learning environment. We consider and reflect together how the likelihood of such incidents recurring can be reduced. De-briefing occurs to consider everyone’s actions and responses and how to improve practice.

Our Commitment to our Pupils

Young people are all individual and unique and we celebrate this.

- We have an inclusive by design approach.
- We value developing strong and respectful relationships within the whole school community. This includes young people, between team members, with parents/carers, and the wider community of professionals.
- We maintain clear boundaries and expectations to create safe and predictable environments.
- We regularly consult pupils to ensure their voices are heard.
- We recognise children can be distressed and can experience meltdowns or shutdowns. We also recognise that some behaviours are just part of everyone’s childhood and adolescence, for example, pushing boundaries when developing independence.



- We recognise that as a whole school community we impact one another. Regular reflective practice enables us to understand, make sense of and support this impact positively.
- Our philosophy is never based on punishment but focused on solutions. Our children and young people are managing the best way that they know how, with the skills they currently have.
- There are times when children may become so distressed that additional measures may be required to keep them and others safe. Our staff are trained to respond appropriately and must always use the least restrictive intervention possible.
- Our staff are role models in helping our pupils learn more skilful ways to experience success and create inclusive communities.

Supporting Wellbeing

Senior leaders take responsibility for implementing measures to ensure our approach to supporting needs and behaviour meets the following national minimum expectation:

- ❖ We have high expectations of pupils. Our expectation relating to their behaviour is always understood according to their individual strengths and needs. We help children understand their needs are unique and responses are such.
- ❖ School leaders visibly and consistently support all team members in supporting pupils' needs and behaviour through following this policy.
- ❖ Universal and personalised measures are in place to support our pupils to be the best versions of themselves.
- ❖ All members of the school community create a positive safe environment in which bullying behaviour, physical threats or abuse and intimidation are not tolerated, in which pupils are safe and feel safe and everyone is treated respectfully.
- ❖ Any incidents of bullying behaviour, sexual violence and harassment, discrimination, aggression, and derogatory language (including name calling) are dealt with quickly and effectively.
- ❖ Staff are supported through regular de-briefs, reflective practice coaching and supervision.

Key Roles

The Role of School Leaders

Our school leadership team is highly visible, with leaders routinely engaging with pupils, parents / carers and staff on setting and maintaining the school culture and an environment where everyone feels safe and supported. Leaders ensure that all new staff are inducted into the setting's culture to ensure they understand its rules and routines and how best to support pupils to participate in creating the culture of the setting. All new staff receive bespoke training as part of their induction into understanding the needs of the pupils through the group's Trauma Informed Practice modules and CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) De-escalation and Behaviour Management Training. Ongoing training and support are also provided via the professional development arrangements and the Clinical Team.

The Role of Staff

All staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which pupils can learn, including regulation of their own emotions and behaviour, encouraging respect for others, and preventing all forms of bullying behaviour (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) and being alert to any signs of child-on-child abuse. Staff have an important role in developing a calm and safe environment and establishing clear expectations and boundaries. Staff uphold the whole-setting approach to behaviour by teaching and modelling expected behaviour and positive relationships so that pupils can see examples of good habits and are confident to ask for help when needed. Staff communicate the school expectations, routines, values and standards both explicitly through teaching skills, visual supports and in every interaction with pupils. Staff also receive clear guidance about expectations of their own conduct, which are set out in the Code of Conduct and Ethics Policy.



The Role of Pupils

All pupils deserve to learn in an environment that is calm, safe, supportive and where they are treated with dignity. To achieve this, every pupil is made aware, in line with their individual capacity, of the school standards, expectations, pastoral support, and therapeutic consequence processes. Pupils are taught that they have a duty to contribute to the school culture and are asked about their experience of the school and provide feedback in ways that are accessible and meaningful to them. This can help support the evaluation, improvement and implementation of this policy. Every pupil is supported to achieve the best standards they can, including an induction and transition process that familiarises them with the school culture.

The Role of Parents/Carers

The role of parents and carers is crucial in helping the school to develop and maintain our culture and approach. Including parents and carers within the whole school community is key to ensure comprehensive support around the young person. Parents and carers are encouraged to get to know our Positive Behaviour and Relationships Policy and related policies and, where possible, take part in the life of the school and its culture. Parents/carers should be encouraged to reinforce the policy at home as appropriate. Where a parent/carer has any concerns, they should raise this directly with the school while continuing to work in partnership with them. We build and maintain positive relationships with parents/carers, by keeping them updated about their child, encouraging them to celebrate successes, or holding sessions for parents/carers to help them support the consistency of the policy and their child's needs. Where appropriate, parents/carers should be included in pastoral work, including attending reviews of specific interventions in place.

The Role of Bayleaf Residential Support Workers

Our RSWs play a vital role in helping our cared for children experience a positive experience of school. RSWs support Bayleaf Care children by:

- ❖ Completing daily handover books.
- ❖ Supporting pupils to arrive at school ready to learn.
- ❖ Supporting pupils at break and lunchtimes where children require a higher staff-to-pupil ratio.
- ❖ Providing in-school key adult support for children who require a higher staff-to-pupil ratio.
- ❖ Engaging with the Learning Passport of educational experiences.
- ❖ Contributing evidence of progress towards EHCP outcomes which is recorded in each child's Learning Journey.

Clinical and Wellbeing Approaches

The overarching wellbeing approach throughout Bayleaf is embedded by delivering care, education and clinical provisions that meet a young person's needs, informed by current wellbeing research theory and evidence. The Clinical Team is multi-disciplined, and includes psychology/psychotherapy, speech and language therapy and occupational therapy. The Team provides training, consultation, individual therapy, group sessions and facilitate reflective practice for team members.

Focus on Relationships

Positive and meaningful relationships throughout the whole-school community are essential to fostering a healthy environment for all. Empathy, trust and consistency are all important in building relationships. For various reasons, children can test and challenge relationships, therefore adults responsible for them require the ability to sensitively and confidently manage the adult-child relationship. There is an expectation that we are kind to one another and help to lead and drive high standards of culture and positive behaviour across the school to benefit young people.

We celebrate difference and make reasonable adjustments to enable children to access learning and engaging to the best of their ability. This approach is informed by formal assessments (e.g. Educational/Clinical Psychologist), EHCP's, Clinical Documents and Plans and getting to know our young people – their likes, dislikes, and how to help



them reach their potential. As far as possible, we use a proactive approach to anticipate potential stressors that might lead to behaviour.

Creating an Inclusive Community

We provide clear expectations and consistent boundaries. We clearly communicate our expectations through speech, visuals and modelling so all staff and pupils (in line with their ability) are aware of the expectations and boundaries appropriate to their strengths and needs. Our behaviour curriculum is part of our Personal, Social, Health and Citizenship / Sex and Relationships curriculums. Routines and structure are integral to the school day. For example, staff will ensure that pupils receive a timetable for their learning and daily activities that is appropriate to their unique age and stage. We create calm, welcoming and clean spaces, taking into account the sensory sensitivities and needs of our population. We use a total communication approach which aligns with the communication strengths and needs of our population.

Many of our pupils may experience more intense emotional responses and/or struggle to process, share, express their emotions. We support our pupils to develop skills to understand and manage their emotions and behaviour through the use of PACE approaches and the Zones of Regulation. This helps supports a shared language approach within the whole-school community.

Each pupil has an individual behaviour support plan and risk assessment. These detail baseline and escalation behaviours for individual pupils and identify strategies that support the pupil with positive behaviours. Pupils are encouraged to input into their Individual Behaviour Support Plans.

PACE

- A light-hearted, relaxed and **PLAYFUL** attitude can be used to develop a connection in the relationship at the appropriate time.
- **ACCEPT** what the child is saying by reflecting back to him what has been understood, and through matching his energy in the moment (N.B. matching emotional energy is NOT the same as matching aggression). When emotionally aroused/distressed, children will find it much harder to process language, so staff should use simple language at these times.
- Be **CURIOS** and wonder with the child about the meaning behind his behaviour (e.g. I wonder why you are doing / saying that - it seems to me that you are really upset / worried etc.)
- Staff will help the child to figure out what they might be feeling in the situation and **EMPATHISE** with how they may be experiencing it. Staff can make 'best guesses' at what might be going on, using the clues they observe in what the child says / does / how he/she appears.

Stopping to be curious, accepting the inner life of the child, and understanding how this influences the more externally revealed behaviour means that we build the trust and security in the relationship that has previously been missing for them. With this connection, the child will cope better with the boundaries and expectations that are put in place. Accepting and understanding why a child is behaving in a particular way is NOT the same as tolerating it. Once staff have expressed empathy for the child/young person's thoughts, feelings and experiences, and there is an emotional connection between them, they can then provide guidance, feedback and limit setting.

On a daily basis staff will provide children with consistent and predictable experiences with clear routines and structure. Staff will control the emotional rhythm of the school not the children. This means that the adults will adopt a consistent and calm way of managing each child behaviour that steps aside from confrontation or coercive interactions, without ignoring their need for attention.



Staff will develop an understanding of their own reactions and triggers so they can remain reflective, even when the child is in crisis. This is encouraged through daily handovers, supervisions, core group meetings and team meetings.

Staff uses zones of regulation to identify the different stages of emotional arousal and behaviour, and the most effective staff responses to be utilised.

GREEN Zone (child is able to regulate his/her emotions and behaviour)

AMBER Zone (early warning signs that the child is struggling to regulate) emotions and behaviour)

RED Zone (emotions and behaviours that pose a risk to self or others)

Using the traffic light analogy, an individual's emotions / behaviour moves from regulated (**Green**), to a level that indicates that problems are about to occur (**Amber**) prior to the occurrence of the emotions / behaviour that pose a risk to self or others (**Red**). After the red level, care must be taken to ensure that the individual returns to the green phase. This format enables staff to easily identify when they should intervene to prevent emotions / behaviour escalating to dangerous levels.

The safety and welfare of the children and staff at the Bayleaf Hub is paramount. The Bayleaf Hub operates a conflict resolution/ safe intervention (CPI) policy; If the child is not showing signs of returning to the amber/green level, then staff may have to intervene as a last resort. In the event of an incident where significant harm has been caused, the staff member should contact the Head teacher to seek advice regarding the home involvement and exclusion

Use of Rewards and Recognition

We recognise and celebrate effort not just achievement and examples of our rewards and reinforcements include praise, Star of the Week, 'days out, unexpected rewards, Hopes, Inspiration and Aspiration (HIA) time, certificates. Achievements will be shared with the wider community, such as parents/carers. Rewards are never taken away from a student once they have been earned for the intention of providing a sanction.

Responding to Distress and Need

There are times when our pupils become distressed and may require other sources of support. When a staff member becomes aware they respond empathically, predictably, promptly and clearly in line with this policy. The first priority will be to establish the physical and emotional safety of pupils and staff and to restore a calm environment. Keeping children and young people safe is always the highest priority for all team members. We will also consider whether the behaviour gives cause to suspect that a pupil is suffering, or is likely to suffer, harm. Team members must be familiar with, and follow, the setting's Child Protection and Safeguarding Policy. All concerns, no matter how small, that a child or young person is being harmed or is at risk of harm must be reported to the setting's Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy. The school has responsibility to respond to pupils' behaviour outside of the setting's premises (including online) to such an extent as is reasonable. The school adopts a range of initial intervention strategies to help emotional regulation and behaviour.



Natural and Logical Consequences

Positive reinforcement combined with natural and logical consequences are important and necessary to support our whole school culture. All children and young people require boundaries and consequences that are fair, predictable and understandable. Children are encouraged to be a part of devising these. Natural consequences occur without the intervention of an adult. For example, a young person might throw a favoured object when they are feeling angry which might then break and therefore cannot be used. Shame is also considered a natural consequence, and young people will require support with this. Logical consequences are adult-led and are linked to the event, and when a natural consequence may not occur or may be a safety hazard. For example, if a young person removing their seatbelt during a car journey – a logical consequence to ensure safety may be to avoid car journeys whilst a plan to ensure seatbelts are worn is in place. Natural and logical consequences will be communicated to the child in an empathic and collaborative way, never in a shaming way. We do not use punitive sanctions, for example detention or removal of privileges. These can promote a sense of shame, are often not linked to the behaviour and therefore do not encourage our pupils to learn what to do instead. The consequence must always be linked to the behaviour to provide a learning opportunity. Repairing relationships (a restorative approach) is a key part of natural and logical consequences and it is the team member's responsibility to approach this repair if it is difficult for the young person.

De-Escalation

De-escalation techniques are our primary responsive strategies, these include:

- ❖ Use a calm approach with neutral body language
- ❖ Use minimal verbal interactions during de-escalation
- ❖ Use positive framing language (“kind hands” rather than “stop hitting”)
- ❖ Use planned and proactive positive distraction (for example talk about the young person's passion)
- ❖ Divert the young person to a different, preferred activity or experience
- ❖ Change their environment (for example allowing a young person to access a calm room or outdoor safe space)
- ❖ We will encourage the young person to engage in a preferred sensory activity or strategy to help them co-regulate
- ❖ Changes to the team supporting the young person
- ❖ Use of space and allowing the young person to move and run, perhaps complete a sensory circuit
- ❖ Use visual supports to support the pupil to process and understand
- ❖ Unique strategies that the pupil themselves has requested as part of their consultation to their individualised plan that aligns with the Ask, Accept, Develop Strategy and Connect, Co Regulate and Co-Reflect.

We do not use:

- ❖ planned ignoring
- ❖ asking a student why they are behaving in a certain way
- ❖ any shame based approach
- ❖ any language which could be interpreted as threatening, e.g. last chance.'

The Use of Restrictive Physical Intervention

We are aware that restraint of any kind can have a negative impact on a child's mental health and damage relationships between children and those who educate for them. Restraint is only ever used as a last resort response to maximise safety and minimise harm of the child/young person and others. A reasonable, proportionate and least restrictive course of action is taken when there is an imminent or immediate risk of harm to self or others. It will always be used for the shortest time possible and only when there is no other alternative to help children and staff to stay safe. Staff are fully trained using CPI and work in line with the Bayleaf approach. Where possible we consult with all pupils about their de-escalation plan to ensure their voice is heard and understood in relation to their triggers and how they want their team members to respond.



Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Staff can confiscate, retain or dispose of a pupil's property in line with the DFE's Searching, Screening and Confiscation Guidance. Staff should consider whether the confiscation is proportionate and consider any special circumstances relevant to the case. Items which contribute to the pupil's wellbeing, neurodiversity and sense of safety (for example fidget toys) will never be removed unless there is a risk of significant harm.

Banned Items

1. FIRE LIGHTING EQUIPMENT

- Matches, lighters, etc

2. DRUGS and SMOKING EQUIPMENT

- Nicotine or Tobacco products, Cigarettes, E-cigarettes, Vapes etc
- Alcohol
- Solvents
- Any form of illegal drug
- Any other drugs except medicines covered by the Prescribed Medicines Procedure, including legal highs

3. WEAPONS and OTHER DANGEROUS IMPLEMENTS or SUBSTANCES

- Knives or blades, including pen knives, craft knives, razors
- Catapults or guns of any kind, including replicas and BB guns
- Laser pens and LED torches (pupils who cycle are permitted to bring their lights but these must be kept in a bag and switched off)
- Studded arm bands, belts bracelets, etc
- Whips or similar items such as long chains
- Pepper sprays and gas canisters (e.g. CS gas)
- Fireworks or explosives of any kind
- Dangerous chemicals (e.g. strong acids and alkalis, bleaches, hair dyes, etc)

4. Other Items

- Any form of liquid-based correction fluid
- Chewing gum
- Energy drinks/Fizzy, sugary drinks
- Large quantities of sweets, biscuits, crisps and other unhealthy items
- Offensive material (pornographic, homophobic, racist etc)
- Any aerosol (other than essential medication)
- Mobile phones, smart devices, cameras and recording devices

Removal from the Classroom

Removal from a classroom is only ever considered when the safety and wellbeing of the individual, classmates and staff are at risk. We will always additionally consider the potential disruption of others learning opportunities in immediate area. The pupil will continue to be supervised at a level appropriate to their emotional and intellectual needs. At other times, we may choose to remove the rest of their peers in order to ensure their safety and to cause minimal disruption to their learning. The Headteacher maintains strategic oversight of any removals, makes sure the reasons that may lead to pupils being removed are transparent and known to all staff and pupils that removal is for the shortest time possible, in an appropriate place that is resourced to learn and refocus, supervised by trained staff, with a clear process for reintegration of the pupil into the classroom as soon as it is appropriate and safe to do so. Pupils will not be removed from classrooms for prolonged periods of time without the explicit agreement of the Headteacher. Staff will reflect on and review the action that was taken to make practice improvements where possible.



Suspension and Exclusion

All pupils are entitled to an education where they are protected from disruption and can learn in a calm, safe and supportive environment. Headteachers can use suspension and permanent exclusion in response to serious incidents and to enable time to make the environment safe and ready again before the pupil returns. This will also be seen as a very last resort, as removing a pupil from school as an environment with trusted adults is rarely likely to be in a pupil's best interests. We also recognise the impact this might have on the young person and or parent and will work to support the young person and their family/carers. Please refer to the Suspension and Permanent Exclusion Policy for more information.

De-briefing

It is good practice to provide a space for children to de-brief following a significant incident and to support relationship reparation. This needs to be at a time that is appropriate and timely and when everyone is ready. We can use visual and narrative techniques to support and promote learning during any pupil's de-brief. It is recognised that some pupils will struggle to reflect as they may not recall memories during dysregulation and therefore, we ensure all de-briefs occur in the pupil's best interest. There are trauma informed neurodiversity affirming de-brief documents that are aligned with the restraint reduction pledge.

Colleague Wellbeing

It is recognised that managing complex needs can be stressful for staff, and we aim to create a positive and trauma informed whole setting culture. Our strategies support individuals to be aware of and also manage their own well-being. Schools support colleagues after an incident and/or challenging day in a non-judgemental and empathic safe space and post-incident de-briefs are mandatory. Staff are also supported with regular reflective practice groups to enable them to process the impact of the work.

Recording and Reporting

The school has a strong and effective system for data capture, including all components of the behaviour culture. Data is captured on EduSpot. This is monitored through trends and patterns objectively analysed regularly by designated team members, with a monitoring and evaluation cycle, with engagement from school leaders and governors. This enables us to support a whole school approach to reduce behaviour incidents and restrictive practice. This includes: behaviour incident data, attendance, exclusion and suspension data, incidents of searching, screening and confiscation, and surveys for staff, pupils, governors, proprietors and other stakeholders on their perceptions and experiences of the setting's behaviour culture. School leaders analyse and audit data with an objective lens and from multiple perspectives: at school level, group level and individual staff and pupil level. School leaders pose questions to drill down further to identify possible factors contributing to the behaviour, system problems or failure to provide appropriate support. Analysing the data by protected characteristic and using those findings to inform policy and practice help the setting ensure that it is meeting its duties under the Equality Act 2010.

Behaviours presented by the young people which are dangerous or criminally harmful will require reporting to outside agencies, such as the police.

Anti-Bullying Behaviour

Children and young people may lack the social skills required to manage relationships, and/or they may not have learnt a way of managing relationships through appropriate role modelling. Staff will remain vigilant to signs of bullying behaviour, which could be obvious or subtle, in person or online, and will be dealt with according to the Anti-Bullying Behaviour Policy.



Child-On-Child Abuse and Sexual Harassment

Please refer to the Child-on-child Abuse Policy. Following any report or concerns raised of child-on-child abuse or sexual harassment offline or online, the school will follow the Child-on-Child Abuse Policy and notify the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) or Deputy immediately. The school is clear that sexual violence and sexual harassment are never acceptable, will not be tolerated and that incidents where behaviour falls below expectations will be addressed. All staff are aware of the importance of challenging all inappropriate language and behaviour between pupils. The school will never normalise sexually abusive language or behaviour by treating it as ‘banter’, an inevitable fact of life or an expected part of growing up. We advocate strenuously for high standards of conduct between pupils and staff; they should demonstrate and model manners, courtesy and dignified/respectful relationships. It is essential that all victims are reassured they will be supported, kept safe, and are being taken seriously, regardless of how long it has taken them to come forward. Abuse that occurs online or outside of the school will not be downplayed and will be treated equally seriously. A victim will never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor will a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report or their experience minimised.

Online Incidents

Please also see the Staying Safe Online Policy. The way in which pupils relate to one another online can have a significant impact on the culture at school. Negative interactions online can damage the school’s culture and can lead to school feeling like an unsafe place. Behaviour issues online can be very difficult to manage given issues of anonymity, and online incidents occur both on and off the premises. The school is clear that even though the online space differs in many ways, the same standards of behaviour are expected online as apply offline, and that everyone should be treated with kindness, respect and dignity. Inappropriate online behaviour including bullying, the use of inappropriate language, the soliciting and sharing of nude or semi-nude images and videos and sexual harassment will be addressed in accordance with the same principles as offline behaviour, and the process set out in the Safeguarding Policy for reporting must be followed when an incident raises a safeguarding concern. The Designated Safeguarding Lead or Deputy must be informed immediately. We will address any online behaviour online that poses a threat or causes harm to another pupil.

Suspected Criminal Behaviour

In cases when a staff member suspects criminal behaviour, the Headteacher will make an initial assessment of whether an incident should be reported to the police by gathering enough information to establish the facts of the case. These initial investigations will be fully documented, and every effort will be made to preserve any relevant evidence. Once a decision is made to report the incident to police, the school will ensure any further action they take does not interfere with any police action taken. However, the school retains the discretion to continue investigations and implement their own consequences so long as it does not conflict with police action. When making a report to the police, it will often be appropriate to make in tandem a report to the Local Authority. The setting’s Safeguarding Policy must be followed, with the Designated Safeguarding Lead (or deputy) being informed immediately.

Complaints

Any complaint or concern raised by a child or young person will be taken very seriously. A complaint will be dealt with in accordance with the Complaints Policy.