Aspire Schools
Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy

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Policy reviewed by	Executive Team To be ratified by Trustees Autumn 2026
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1. Purpose and context

Aspire Schools is committed to being a 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' community. As a school, we are aware that to ensure everyone in the school community feels safe, the educational environment needs to be high in both nurture and structure. All children and young people need predictable routines, high expectations and consistent yet caring responses to behaviour. These fundamentals must be in place and modelled appropriately.

'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approaches are embodied in our school's aspiration to build a nurturing and caring ethos, alongside clear and consistent boundaries. Improving and maintaining the social, emotional and mental health and well-being of our staff, students and parents/carers is a priority.

In addition, we recognise that for children and young people to thrive and progress in their learning, we must first address their need for a sense of safety and belonging (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs). We wish to work towards these important goals in all aspects of school life, and to provide an ethos, environment and curriculum that supports the whole school community.

It is acknowledged that members of the school community may have vastly different parenting experiences and views on behaviour. However, the aim of our Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy is to bring us all together to adhere to some key principles and practices that reflect our school ethos. Relational responses are the cornerstone of this approach.

This policy has been written in line with the following legislation:

- Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff (DfE 2024)
- Searching, screening and confiscation in school (DfE 2022)
- The Equality Act 2010
- Restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, in schools (DFE 2026)
- The SEN Code of Practice 2015
- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its students
- Sections 88-94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006 which requires schools to regulate students' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy, and gives schools the authority to confiscate students' property
- Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2026)

This policy is underpinned by the core values of Aspire Schools:

- Respect
- Hope
- Forgiveness
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Love
- Growth mind-set

This policy should be read in line with other relevant policies

- Anti-Bullying Policy
- Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy
- Risk Assessment for Student Welfare Policy
- Suspensions and Exclusions Policy

2. Aims

Our policy embodies the principles of 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approaches. It aims to:

- Ensure that all members of the school community feel safe and secure.
- Prioritise connectedness, trust and transparency so that relationships between all members of the school community can flourish, enabling children/young people to be 'ready' for learning.
- Foster collaboration in all aspects of school life so that children/young people have 'voice and choice' including in relation to their social, emotional and mental health.
- Empower children/young people to self-regulate using pro-social coping strategies.
- Teach children/young people how to communicate their thoughts and feelings safely (using emotion coaching), in order that they might use this important life skill in adulthood.
- Support children/young people through explicit pro-social modelling, to develop a strong sense of morality and empathy that allows them to take on board the thoughts and feelings of others.
- Maintain high expectations of behaviour from all our students while using a caring, nurturing approach.
- Esteem children and adults as individuals and respect their rights, values and beliefs.
- Encourage children and young people to take pride in their school and the school environment.
- Provide a highly structured 'planned environment' which promotes positive learning for all.
- Challenge and support where there are any behaviours involving bullying, harassment or discrimination.

This policy applies, at all times, to students who are working with Aspire Schools' staff: in school and also on school trips or activities during the school day or at other times. There may also be occasions where Aspire Schools staff use this policy outside of this, for example, in supporting students to repair their relationship after poor behaviour that has taken place outside of school, or deciding not to take students on a trip to a particular place if there have been difficulties at that venue outside of school hours.

3. Expectations for students

Our expectations of students are that they are ready to learn, respectful, and safe.

Everybody has the right to **learn**, to **feel safe**, and to **be respected**				
BE READY TO LEARN				
Be on time	Go to your lessons	Try to achieve the best you can	Phones to be handed in	
BE RESPECTFUL				
Use appropriate language & keep personal comments to yourself	Listen to others and expect to be listened to	Keep hands, feet and objects to yourself	Work hard and stay for the whole lesson	Look after the building, displays and equipment
BE SAFE				
Follow staff instructions and the rules for health and safety		Be in the right place at the right time		
Reminder	Warnings	Refer on & time to reflect	Restorative action and follow up	

4. Roles and responsibilities

Senior Leader Expectations
At Aspire Schools, our Senior Leadership Team recognise most children/young people are able to function well in an educational environment which is high in both **nurture** and **structure.** However, we are also aware of the inextricable causal link between unidentified special needs and the impact of trauma and attachment difficulties on attendance, physical and mental health, behaviour regulation and, as a consequence, progress in learning. We aim to address this complex issue by ensuring:

- We create the conditions needed for all the key members of staff responsible for these interconnecting disciplines to work closely and meet regularly.
- We are persistently seeking to identify the underlying 'causes' of dysregulation or attachment seeking behaviours at the earliest opportunity via our collaborative approach to working with multi-disciplinary teams
- We support our multi-disciplinary teams to implement appropriate interventions using a joined-up approach.

Leadership and management of behaviour is a key part of the job description of all leaders at Aspire Schools. Leaders at all levels will be highly visible at Aspire Schools. Leaders will routinely engage with students, parents and staff on setting and maintaining the behaviour culture and an environment where everyone feels safe and supported.

The Headteachers delegate responsibility and accountability for behaviour to the Heads of School.

The **Head of School** will:

- Ensure that there are clear routines for all parts of the school day, and all spaces of the school, and ensure that these are written clearly in the school handbook.
- Ensure that all staff are aware of the routines around the building, dedicating time in school meetings to talking through these and rehearsing key elements of this.
- Ensure that new staff are properly inducted into the routines around the building and the culture of how behaviour is managed.
- Be visible around the building, supporting staff in challenging behaviour that does not yet meet our expectations.
- Work with staff who are struggling to manage behaviour in their lessons, to ensure they are supported and challenged to develop this skill.
- Take the lead during any high-level behaviour incidents.
- Ensure that all behaviour is logged appropriately, and that these logs are used to reflect on how we can all be better at managing behaviour.
- Working with the Deputy Head/SENDCo, ensure that appropriate reasonable adjustments and support is put in place for children who require it.
- Ensure that logical consequences are used, not punishments, to support students develop habits of good behaviour.
- Get the agreement of the Headteacher before suspending a student for more than one day.

If the Head of School is not in school, this responsibility is delegated to the **Deputy Head**.

The **Deputy Head of School/SENDCo** will:

- Take responsibility for behaviour, as described above, if the Head of School is out of school or otherwise unavailable.
- Ensure that reasonable adjustments are in place for every student who requires it.
- Ensure that all students have an individual student profile, which lets staff know how best to support them and meet their needs so that behaviour does not escalate.
- Put additional behaviour interventions in place for students who require them.

The **Behaviour Support Lead** will:

- Ensure that every student has an up-to-date individual risk assessment which highlights the dangerous behaviours they are known to engage in, explains triggers so that staff can spot escalation early, and explains how best to manage these dangerous behaviours should they occur.
- Lead the team of behaviour and learning support staff to always provide on-call behaviour support throughout the school day.
- Support the Deputy Head/SENDCo with facilitating/organising/running behaviour interventions where appropriate.
- Support the Head of School in ensuring that all incidents are logged and appropriately reflected on.

Middle leaders will:

- Support staff that they line manage to develop the skills necessary to manage behaviour in a positive manner.
- Support the Head of School with behaviour around site, being a visible presence and reinforcing the school's routines and expectations.

Wider staff expectations

- We value our relationships with children/young people and their families, and this is evident in our personalised, responsive approach.
- We strive to understand the function behind a child/young person's behaviour; we are professionally curious.
- We assume complexity in our approach/interactions and seek to support children and young people to feel safe.
- We take an empathetic stance which asks, 'What happened to you?' instead of 'What is wrong with you?'
- We consistently model the empathy, kindness and respect (including using inclusive, trauma informed language) we expect from our children/young people when we interact with colleagues and students.
- We always give children/young people a fresh start as required - we practise 'unconditional positive regard.'
- We ensure that we support and implement the agreed 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approaches in our day-to-day interactions with all children/young people.

5. How we manage behaviour

Environmental consistency

At Aspire Schools, we recognise that consistency and routines help children and young people to feel safe. We aim to ensure that:

- All school staff have read the school's Behaviour Regulation and Relationships Policy and feel confident in applying it fully.
- All school staff are aware of the strategies being used to support individual children/young people with additional needs (including acknowledgement and awareness of our approach to using the Stages of Distress and Support proforma).
- All school staff are aware of the philosophy ***'connection before correction'*** when addressing dysregulated/connection seeking behaviour.
- All school staff are trained in basic neurological development theory and use this knowledge to **respond** and not react to children and young people.
- All staff are trained in de-escalation (Team Teach) which supports use of shared consistent language.
- All staff are involved in regular refresher training on 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approaches.
- As a school, we refer to the school's 'student expectations'/values every time we provide feedback/reprieve, in which we explain how a behaviour has/has not embodied these expectations.
- There is a whole school application of natural/logical consequences where they are required, with a focus on educational and protective outcomes.
- We use praise and positive reinforcement constantly
    - praising students for positive choices
    - recognising and acknowledging it when they are having difficulties and making sure that they know we believe in them and their ability to make the right choice
    - helping students reflect on how far they have come since joining one of our schools
    - contacting parents/carers to celebrate positive choices and progress in behaviour
- All staff provide problem solving and restorative opportunities for children and young people when they are emotionally ready/back at base line (in line with Stages of Distress and Support).

It is the responsibility of the Head of School or Service to ensure that school systems and practices are based on these principles, and lead to the development of an effective culture for positive behaviour.

6. 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.

Bullying is, therefore:

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

Bullying can include:

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic/Biphobic • Transphobic • Disability-based	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying including online and technology-enabled bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites Bullying through AI tools – this may include the creation or sharing of manipulated, digitally altered or AI-generated images or recordings intended to cause harm or distress

At Aspire Schools, we put in place measures to prevent all forms of bullying (including cyber-bullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying) which include:

- Awareness sessions through PSHE lessons and tutor time
- Safe spaces and key adults in which to report any issues of bullying
- Bullying checklist when any issues of bullying are raised

Please see our Anti-bullying Policy for further information.

7. Dangerous and discriminatory behaviours

Dangerous and discriminatory behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Harmful sexual behaviour: such as explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, jokes or taunting, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, inappropriate touching or interfering with clothes
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching without consent)
- Racist, faith-based, sexist, homophobic, biphobic, transphobic or disability related discrimination or harassment
- Online sexual harassment, such as unwanted sexual comments and messages (including on social media), sharing of nude or semi-nude images and/or videos, or sharing of unwanted explicit content
- Theft

7.1 Prejudice-related incidents

Aspire Schools will respond to all prejudice-related incidents, including behaviour relating to protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. This includes behaviour relating to disability, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity. Such incidents will be taken seriously, recorded appropriately and addressed through proportionate educational, protective and/or safeguarding responses.

Where discriminatory behaviour may indicate a safeguarding concern, staff will follow the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and seek advice from the DSL or Deputy DSL.

In the case of dangerous and discriminatory behaviours taking place, the Head of School will carry out a Risk Assessment for Student Welfare. See Risk Assessment for Student Welfare Policy.

In cases of harmful sexual behaviours or sexual violence, the specific risk assessment in appendix 5 of the Risk Assessment for Student Welfare Policy will be used.

In serious cases, these types of behaviours could result in suspension or a permanent exclusion.

Due to the vulnerability of our students, we would work with partner agencies to avoid any permanent exclusion from our School. Please see our Suspensions and Exclusions Policy.

8. Child-on-child abuse

Aspire Schools is very clear that sexual violence and harassment are never acceptable and will not be tolerated. Child-on-child abuse can take many forms and may occur in person or online. It may include sexual violence, sexual harassment, harmful sexual behaviour, sexualised language, coercive or controlling behaviour, unwanted sexual touching, sharing of nude or semi-nude images, including digitally altered or AI-generated images, and other forms of abuse or exploitation.

Staff will not dismiss such behaviour as "banter", "just messing around" or an inevitable part of growing up. All reports will be taken seriously and considered on a case-by-case basis, taking account of the age and developmental stage of the children and young people involved, their individual needs and vulnerabilities, and any safeguarding concerns.

Following any reports of child-on-child sexual violence or harassment, online or in real life, our staff will follow the procedures outlined in the Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy. Staff will treat this as a safeguarding matter, log it on CPOMS, and refer it to the DSL or Deputy DSL to advise on the response. Each incident will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

8.1 Safeguarding separation

There may be circumstances where the school determines that it is necessary to temporarily separate students in order to manage an identified safeguarding risk. This may follow incidents involving child-on-child abuse, harmful sexual behaviour, sexual violence or harassment, serious bullying, intimidation, exploitation, criminal behaviour or any other situation where the safety and wellbeing of one or more students may be compromised.

Safeguarding separation is a protective safeguarding measure and is not a disciplinary sanction.

Decisions to implement safeguarding separation arrangements will be based on an individual risk assessment and will be reviewed regularly. Consideration will be given to:

- the wishes and welfare of all students involved
- ongoing risks to safety and wellbeing
- educational access and continuity
- the impact on attendance and participation
- safeguarding advice from relevant professionals and agencies.

Safeguarding separation arrangements may include changes to timetables, supervised movement around the site, separate social times, restrictions on contact, amended transport arrangements, use of different entrances and exits, or other proportionate measures necessary to manage risk.

Parents/carers will normally be informed of the arrangements unless doing so would place a child at increased risk of harm.

9. Support systems, including transition

Aspire Schools believes that students who display behaviours that challenge, require support. Our Schools and Services will use the following approaches:

- Transition and induction to ensure new students understand our rules, routines and expectations and the support that will be available to them
- Teaching and learning about positive behaviour, as explained above
- The delivery of an appropriate curriculum
- Access to appropriate in class support and strategies and additional specialist interventions, to support students to learn to manage their behaviour
- Access to appropriate support during and after behaviour incidents, to manage during the crisis and to repair and restore relationships after the incident
- Regular communication with parents/carers and families, previous schools, outside agencies and other professionals and services
- Use of specialist assessors to identify emerging, unmet learning or social and emotional needs.

10. Consequences

Aspire Schools does not use punitive sanctions or detentions, apart from when suspension is deemed necessary.

We do not believe that these are effective for vulnerable children, therefore we do use:

- Reminders of our expectations
- Talking honestly and openly with students to help them understand the impact of their behaviour
- Supporting students to make up for poor behaviour, for example, helping them to apologise to someone they have upset, helping them tidy a mess they have made, etc.
- Communicating with parents and carers so that they can help with the above two points
- Removal from lessons (see section below)
- Logical consequences (see below)
- Referral to other agencies, including, where appropriate, the police (see below)
- Suspension (see below)

Aspire Schools does believe that actions have logical consequences, and that an effective behaviour strategy helps students understand and work through these. To illustrate this point: we would never remove a particular lesson or enrichment activity as a sanction for poor behaviour. However, if a student has refused to follow instructions all morning, the Head of School may decide that they cannot safely be taken out of the school site for a trip or activity that day.

Our schools will often refer to other agencies to secure additional support for students. This could include, for example, agencies supporting with drug and alcohol misuse, youth offending services, etc.

Aspire Schools may also, at times, refer student's behaviour to the police. We will do this if other agencies e.g. social workers recommend, and/or if we believe that doing so will ensure that the student accesses the support they need, and/or understands the seriousness of their behaviour. If we do decide to refer to the police, we will also refer to Children's Services, if they are not already involved.

Aspire Schools does not use suspension as a punitive sanction. We use it when needed to keep students and staff safe, or to give us time to plan for a change in provision that will hopefully meet students' needs more effectively. Please see our Suspension and Exclusion Policy for more details.

11. Banned items

The following items are not allowed on the school site.

- Mobile phones and other personal electronic or internet enabled devises (to be handed in at start of day)
- Smoking paraphernalia
- Energy drinks
- Alcohol or illegal drugs, or drug related paraphernalia
- Weapons of any kind
- Stolen items
- Belts or braces
- Steel-capped boots or shoes

- Illegal images or recordings on electronic devices
- Items deemed contraband by the Head of School
- Any other item deemed inappropriate, unsafe or prohibited by the Head of School

11.1 Screening using metal detectors

The school reserves the right to screen students using a walk-through or hand-held metal detector in order to maintain a safe and secure environment. Screening is carried out for every student on arrival to school site whether or not there is any suspicion that a student is carrying a weapon or other prohibited items.

Screening does not involve physical contact and is distinct from the school's powers to search students. Any member of staff may carry out screening using a metal detector. Students are expected to cooperate with screening. Where a student refuses, staff will seek to understand the reason for the refusal, explain the purpose of screening and support the student to comply. The refusal will be considered in accordance with the school's Behaviour, Safeguarding and Searching and Confiscation procedures.

Where screening indicates the possible presence of a prohibited item, the school may take further action in accordance with its Search and Confiscation procedures, including conducting a search where there are reasonable grounds to do so and involving the police where appropriate.

11.2 Searching and confiscation

In line with the DfE guidance on searching and confiscation, where it is known or suspected that a student is in possession of any banned item, any staff in school may authorise a search of the student and/or their belongings with their consent. If a student does not consent, the Head of School may authorise a search to be conducted without their consent. Please see Appendix II for further details around searching.

If a banned item is found in a search, the Head of School has the discretion to retain that item for collection by an appropriate adult at the end of the day, week or term, or to dispose of it, or to pass it onto the police. The school does not accept any liability for items that are lost or damaged while on the school site. Please see Appendix II for further details**.**

Sanctions for possession of any of these banned items will be taken on a case-by-case basis. Please see our Suspensions and Exclusions Policy.

12. Removal from lessons

Aspire Schools does make use of removal from lessons as a method to support students to manage their own behaviour, and to ensure learning is not disrupted by other students. De-escalation rooms or alternative safe spaces may be used to support students in crisis.

Removal from classrooms is a serious matter, as it will affect a student's learning. All of our staff will try to support the student to remain in class and focus on their learning. They will only be removed if:

a) their behaviour is unsafe and poses an immediate risk to the safety of others, or
b) attempts to support them to stay in class are not being effective, and the education of other students is being unreasonably disrupted, or

c) the student's personal support plan specifies that they need to be allowed out of lessons to calm down or otherwise manage their behaviour

We are not distinguishing between removal for "discipline" and removal for "support" as we believe that these are not distinct, but rather two parts of a spectrum, and both may be present in any removal.

When using de-escalation rooms, students are always supervised. Aspire Schools does not use seclusion at any time, and students in crisis are always supported and monitored by members of staff. If a student asks to be left alone, staff may withdraw in line with that student's handling plan, as long as they are able to monitor the student's safety (for example, through a window or viewing pane in a door). A de-escalation room or safe space must not be used as a means of punishment. Where a student is supported in a separate space, staff will continue to supervise and support the student and will follow the student's individual support plan and risk assessment where applicable.

Staff will not deliberately isolate a student or prevent them from leaving a room as a behaviour-management technique. Where circumstances arise in which restricting a student's movement is necessary to prevent an immediate risk of harm, staff will act in accordance with the school's restrictive intervention procedures and the current DfE guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force. Any such incident will be recorded and reviewed appropriately.

Students will be encouraged to return to lessons as soon as they are able to. If required, staff will support students with restorative conversations with staff or students to facilitate and support their return.

If students are going to be removed from classrooms for prolonged periods of time, this will be done with an Alternative Provision Plan, and only with the agreement of parents/carers, mainstream schools where appropriate, and the Headteacher.

Parents/carers will be contacted at the end of the day if their children are removed from any lessons. This will be logged on Arbor.

Heads of School will ensure that removal data is collected, monitored and analysed, to explore whether particular children are being removed more often than others, and to ensure that appropriate support is put in place.

13. Alternative provision plans

Our schools are Alternative Provision settings. Some students are supported well by our "ordinarily available provision" and can attend a range of classroom lessons as per their timetable. However, some students cannot manage this and need an "alternative provision plan." This could include:

- A reduced timetable (See Attendance Policy for further details)
- A timetable that uses individual work with staff rather than attending classroom lessons
- The inclusion of work experience on a weekly timetable
- The use of offsite independent alternative provisions.

13.1 Off-site direction

Aspire Schools may direct a student to attend educational provision at another setting for the purpose of improving behaviour, maintaining safety, meeting identified needs or supporting positive engagement in education.

Any off-site direction will:

- be lawful, reasonable and proportionate
- be based on an assessment of the student's needs and circumstances
- be reviewed regularly
- have clear educational objectives
- involve communication with parents/carers and relevant professionals where appropriate.

The school retains responsibility for safeguarding, attendance monitoring, educational progress and welfare throughout any period of off-site direction.

Risk assessments will be completed prior to the commencement of any off-site placement and will be reviewed regularly.

14. Restrictive interventions (including the use of reasonable force)

Aspire Schools is committed to our responsibility to keep all students and staff safe from harm. Our schools aim to manage behaviour using the approaches outlined throughout this policy. However, there may be occasions when a restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force, is necessary and lawful to maintain safety, prevent injury, prevent serious damage to property, or to prevent a criminal act.

Restrictive interventions include physical and non-physical interventions that intentionally restrict a student's movement, liberty and/or freedom to act independently. Aspire Schools recognise that restrictive interventions should always be a last resort and only be used where all appropriate preventative and de-escalation strategies have been considered or attempted, unless there is an immediate risk of harm.

In line with the DfE guidance on restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, all members of staff have a legal power to use reasonable force where it is lawful and necessary to do so. Any use of restrictive intervention must be reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances and must comply with the principles and requirements set out in the relevant DfE guidance.

At Aspire Schools, our use of restrictive interventions is governed by the following principles:

- Restrictive intervention, including the use of reasonable force, is only used where it is necessary and lawful to prevent harm, maintain safety, prevent injury, prevent serious damage to property or prevent a criminal offence.
- Where restrictive intervention is used, it is the least restrictive method available, is reasonable, proportionate and necessary in the circumstances, and is used for the shortest possible time.
- Force or physical intervention will never be used as a punishment.
- The dignity, welfare, rights and best interest of the child remain central throughout any restrictive intervention.
- Staff will continually assess whether the intervention remains necessary and will end it

immediately once the risk has reduced sufficiently.

- All students have an individual risk assessment, that supports staff to manage them and their behaviour and reduce or eliminate the need for restrictive intervention.
- Where students are known to present behaviours that may require restrictive intervention, individual support plans and risk assessment will identify preventative strategies, de-escalation approaches, preferred interventions and post incident support.
- All staff working in environments where restrictive interventions may have to be used, are trained in the use of Team Teach.
- All incidents requiring the use of a restrictive intervention are reported to the Headteacher, documented on Arbor and reported on CPOMS.
- Parents and carers are informed in writing after any incident, before the student returns home.
- Following any restrictive intervention, the student's wellbeing and any injuries or concerns will be checked, appropriate medical attention will be provided where required, and the incident will be reviewed with the student where appropriate. Staff involved will also be offered appropriate support and the incident will be reviewed to identify learning and opportunities to reduce the likelihood of recurrence.
- Records of restrictive interventions are reviewed regularly by senior leaders to identify patterns, evaluate proportionality, monitor equality impacts and identify opportunities to reduce future use through preventative practice.
- Heads of School regularly analyse trends relating to restrictive interventions, including the use of reasonable force, to improve practice, reduce reliance on restrictive interventions and ensure that appropriate support and reasonable adjustments are in place for students.

14.1 Seclusion

Aspire Schools does not use seclusion as a behaviour management strategy. Students will never be deliberately isolated or prevented from leaving a room as a means of punishment or behaviour control. Where a student chooses to spend time in a quiet or low-stimulation environment to support self-regulation, this will be voluntary wherever possible, appropriately supervised and reviewed regularly to ensure it remains in the student's best interests. Any situation in which a student is prevented from leaving a room or area will be treated as a restrictive intervention and managed, recorded and reviewed in accordance with this policy.

14.2 Post-incident support

Following any restrictive intervention, appropriate support, including medical attention where required, will be provided to the student, staff involved and, where appropriate, other students affected by the incident. This will include opportunities for restorative conversations once the student has returned to a regulated state, reflection on the effectiveness of preventative strategies, review of individual support plans and consideration of whether additional support or reasonable adjustments are required.

15. Allegations against school staff

The Department for Education (2016) requires that school behaviour policies *"set out the disciplinary action that will be taken against students who are found to have made malicious accusations against school staff".* In line with our trauma informed approach to behaviour management, any malicious

and unfounded accusations made against school staff would be investigated on an individual basis, with staff, the child or young person and parents/carers working together to understand the possible functions of this behaviour.

If appropriate, a Restorative Practice based approach (e.g. a restorative conference) would be used to repair relationships between the child/young person and the staff member, whilst aiming to avoid eliciting shame in the child/young person. The member of staff involved would also be provided with access to emotional support, and/or counselling if required.

16. Engagement with parents/carers

Aspire Schools' values parents/carers as experts in their own child/young person's life. We will provide feedback on students' emotional wellbeing at parent/carer meetings, but will also make contact immediately if we have any concerns about a child/young person's wellbeing.

We also place great value on feedback from parents/carers about the wellbeing of our students. Parents/carers should contact the school to share any concerns. This may be via a phone call or email or direct conversations which may be agreed between the school and the parent/carer.

17. How Aspire Schools supports staff well-being and reflection

Our schools recognise the importance of providing emotional support for staff to help manage stress and secondary trauma, and to reduce the likelihood of staff burnout.

We encourage self-care in the first instance. In addition, we have a 'Well-Being' committee who seek regular feedback from staff on how the school can reduce stress and improve their well-being. Staff are offered the opportunity to debrief with their line managers or senior leaders, where appropriate, following incidents. There is also a supervision offer for DSLs and other leaders.

We also have a supervision offer for staff most at risk of suffering from secondary trauma. See the Aspire Schools Clinical Supervision Procedure for details.

All staff benefit from our Employee Assistance Programme, giving access to counselling as well as a range of advice services. School staff are also made aware of the Education Support Helpline (08000 562 561) for free counselling support on an ad hoc basis as needed.

18. Monitoring and review

It is the responsibility of all staff to incorporate, reinforce and model these expectations in their everyday work, their teaching of lessons and their interactions with students.

It is the responsibility of the Head of School to lead, support and monitor the consistent implementation of this policy.

The Headteacher and the Executive Team are expected to monitor the implementation of the policy, ensuring equality for all and that the school's defining principles are upheld.

This policy is subject to annual review by the Trustees.

Behaviour data will be monitored and analysed regularly to identify patterns and trends, including differences in the use of consequences, removal, restrictive interventions, searches, suspensions and other behaviour responses between different groups of students. This will include consideration of students with SEND and other vulnerabilities and students with protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010. Where disproportionate patterns are identified, the school will consider whether reasonable adjustments, additional support, changes to practice or further assessment are required.

Appendix I

A Graduated Approach

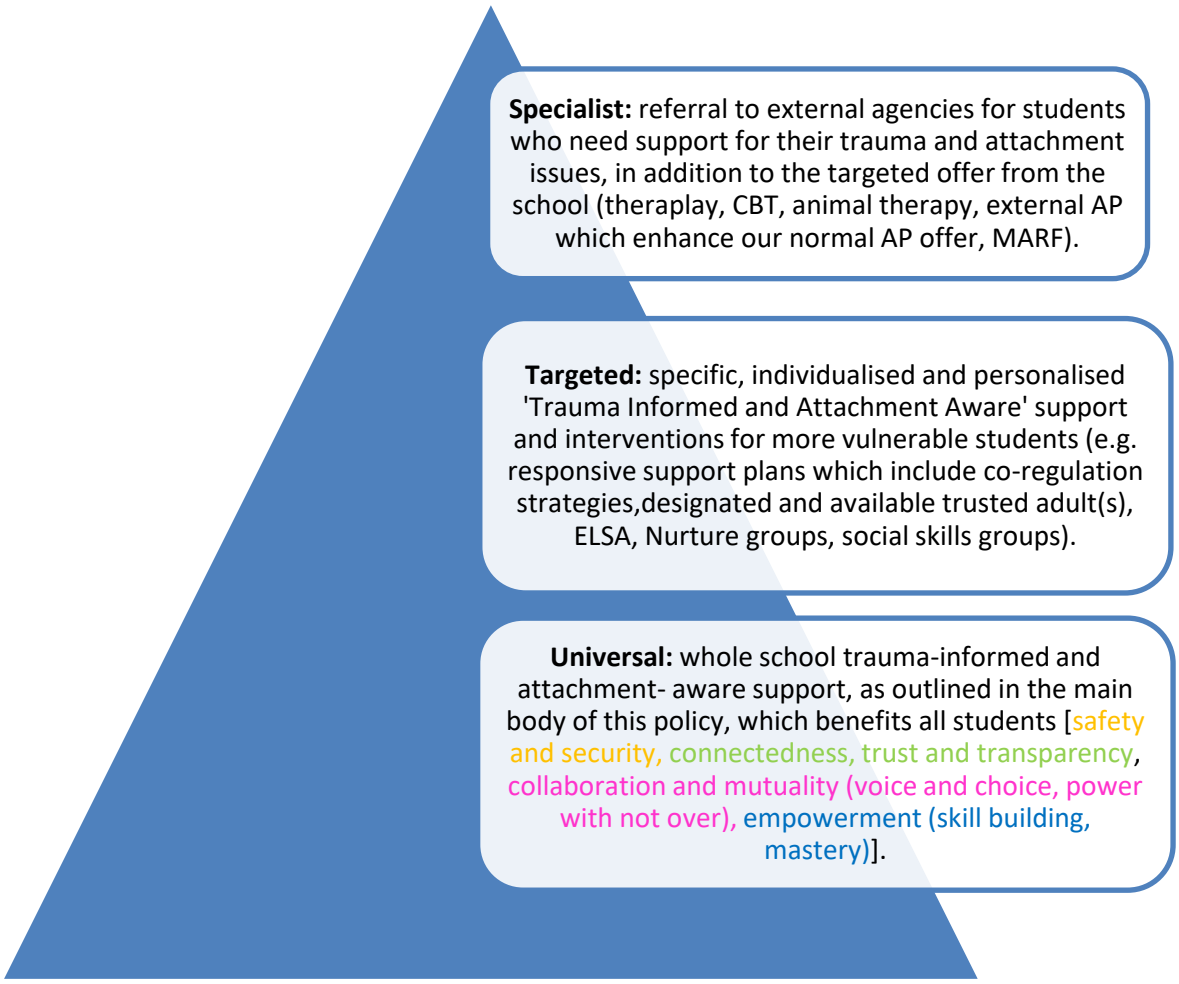
Context

'*Behaviour and discipline in schools: Advice for head teachers and school staff*' draws on the Behaviourist principles of 'reward and sanction' which, although may help to modify the behaviour of many children and young people, **do not work for all children**. This is particularly true for those who have historic or current 'Adverse Childhood Experiences' (ACEs).

Our school policy reflects these principles as follows:

- We will take an adaptive approach with our behaviour policy as appropriate to the needs of all children/young people within our school setting, in line with the Equality Act (2010). For some students, this approach will require an individualised, responsive co-regulation plan. It is our aim to inform parents/carers at the beginning of each year about our adaptive approach, for them to understand that *"being 'fair' is not about everyone getting the same (equality) but about everyone getting what they need (equity)"* (Brighton and Hove Council, 2018).
- Children/young people have a wide range of individual needs which change over time. As such, they will require a flexible approach within an overall structure of consistency. Whilst we envisage that our 'Universal' behavioural approach (please see below) will be effective for some of our young people at Aspire Schools, many of our young people will require extra support for us to ensure an equitable school environment.
- A graduated response to behaviour allows the school and individual staff to support young people according to their current level of need. The pyramid below, provides some examples of support offered at each wave of our graduated response. Children/young people will be provided with support based on their level of need. Given that Aspire Schools view behaviour as a communication of need, frequent difficulties will be seen as an indication that the **level of support may need to be increased** (e.g. a child receiving support at universal level would be assessed using an appropriate tool and then supported at the targeted level). Decisions about the level of support required will always be made in consultation with the child or young person, their parents/carers and external professionals as appropriate.

A graduated approach to support



Whole school graduated approach in action

Step 1

Building resilience and developing self-regulation

- At Aspire Schools, we take a proactive whole school approach to promoting prosocial behaviour.
- We recognise that an important part of this approach involves building resilience and improving our children/young people's ability to self-regulate. This is aligned with a 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approach, and will benefit the whole school community while addressing the needs of students who have experienced trauma and attachment issues.
- Building resilience and improving self-regulation involves direct and indirect learning. Direct learning can only occur when students are functioning at baseline (not at times of crisis). (Please refer to the Stages of Distress and Support in Appendix III)

Direct learning opportunities

- Social values such as kindness and empathy are valued and promoted through day-to-day interactions and the curriculum, including all lessons.
- Explicitly teaching emotional literacy to all students as part of the school curriculum (recognising the physical representation of emotions, labelling emotions).
- Explicit, age-appropriate teaching of the functions and interactions of the triune model of the brain (brain stem - fight or flight, mid brain - emotions, higher brain - problem solving and emotional regulation), otherwise known as 'psychoeducation'.
- Teaching some simple self-regulation strategies to all students so they can manage stress and conflict, building their resilience (grounding strategies, mindfulness etc).
- Creating opportunities to use/practise self-regulating activities for all students as part of the school day, to create a community of regulation.

Indirect learning

- Children and young people are supported by staff who understand the importance of seeing all behaviour as communication.
- Children and young people are supported by staff who assume complexity and trauma may be present and therefore use their professional curiosity, alongside positive language, to **respond** rather than react.

Step 2

Rewards and positive reinforcement

The intrinsic reward offered by warm relationships, verbal praise and stimulating curriculum, are the most effective form of reward for all children and young people. However, Aspire Schools recognises that for many children a more tangible rewards system, which recognises all forms of social and academic achievement, and which regularly communicates this 'good news', is necessary.

As a whole school:

- Rewards and reinforcement are linked to achievement and **improvement/progress** in both academic and social and emotional functioning (including the small steps for some).
- Rewards and reinforcement are given as quickly as possible after the positive behavioural/ academic success.
- Every child experiences some success and recognition – we recognise this is especially important for our vulnerable cohorts who may be struggling to conform and manage their emotions.
- There are multiple opportunities during the day/week for a **fresh start.**

As an individual staff member:

- The most powerful reward a staff member can bestow on a child, or young person is positive attention.
- Children and young people need feedback regularly to help them improve academically. They also need regular feedback to help them develop socially and emotionally. **Praise and acknowledgment** can be very effective in this regard.
    - Frequent 'positive noticing' is as a powerful and effective form of positive reinforcement *(Thank you for being so helpful today … I noticed how you asked for help today when you were unsure … I liked how politely you …).*
    - Praise and acknowledgment are most effective when they are experienced as genuine and specific (and for children/young people who have experienced trauma, focus on an outcome or a concrete action, rather than the individual).

- Praise and acknowledgement can be communicated through other means including displaying and celebrating achievements.
- There is acknowledgement that some children and young people respond positively to public praise, whereas others may need more private recognition.

Step 3

Establishing and maintaining relationships
"There is no more effective neurobiological intervention than a safe relationship, the relationship works to bring the brain back into regulation." (Bruce Perry, PhD, MD, researcher & child psychiatrist)

Aspire Schools places great emphasis on relationships and relational responses. Helping **all** students to realise the value of relationships, and importantly, how to keep them healthy and thriving, is a lifelong skill and one which will positively impact their mental health and well-being into adulthood.

Relationships are the most therapeutic and healing aspect of a 'Trauma Informed and Attachment Aware' approach. They will need to firstly be **established** and then **maintained**.

To achieve this goal, we aim to:

- Understand that we as adults need to identify and manage our own triggers.
- Recognise that as adults, our own values and beliefs will interact with cultural, ethical, and generational differences.
- Meet and greet our children/young people at the school gates and classroom door so they feel 'seen.'
- Help children/young people feel 'held in mind'
  (I thought about you the other day when …. I remember you like ….)
- Follow through with things we say we will do, especially the positive things.
- Role model acknowledging **our own** mistakes and negative emotions, showing how we learn from them to move forward.
- Recognise that 'Human to human interactions are physiological events' (B. Perry, 2015) and as a result, children and young people are 'regulated and rewarded' by warm, positive interactions, however brief.
- Maintain high levels of self-awareness as adults, so that we can make deliberate use of positive body language and other non-verbal communication. This is crucial because *'… gestures, facial expressions and vocalisations that appear "safe" turn off the brain stem.'* (S. Porges, 2006).

Step 4

De-escalation of dysregulated/connection seeking behaviour
Providing high quality, adaptive teaching alongside practicing resilience, regulation and relationship building, are all major factors in ensuring a positive learning environment for all; this will go a long way towards minimising dysregulated/connection seeking behaviour.

However, the school recognise there will be times when children/young people do still struggle to regulate themselves and/or accept the boundaries which are clearly communicated to them. It is at this stage that a consistent approach using a 'shared language' is most important.

Connection before correction using P.A.C.E.

P.A.C.E. (Dan Hughes), is an evidence-based approach to communication with children and young people who have experienced trauma. However, as it is based in neurological responses to human interaction, it is an effective approach for all students.

Playfulness

- Using a playful tone of voice, warm gestures and humour can go a long way to diffuse low level behavioural dysregulation, or when children and young people are 'seeking connection'.
  (It is lovely to see you today. What's all this about … I am sure we can work on this together.)
- Offering limited choices can also be a very effective, light-hearted way to address low level dysregulation.
  (Ok, so you are having a bit of trouble getting started. Let's see how we can get this show on the road: you can write this by hand or use the laptop).

Acceptance

- Accept their intentions and redirect:
  Accept: *When you make silly noises, you are letting me know that you are finding things difficult right now*.
  Redirect*: I'm here to help. You talk, I'll listen and we'll resolve this together; Remember, in the classroom we work quietly so everyone can concentrate. Yesterday you worked quietly in Maths. That's who we need to see today. Just put up your hand if you want some help*.
- Be consistent, kind but firm.

Curiosity

- Listen to and observe the child's communication, it may not be verbal, then reflect what you have observed.
  (I can see that you are agitated/distracted/demotivated right now… I wonder if you are struggling with… I guess you might be worried about…)
- A response may not be forth coming initially. Give take-up time where possible, and let them know you will *'return to see how they are doing'* in a few minutes.
- When you return, keep the tone light but remind them of the expectations and use positive language as much as possible.
  (Ok, it's been a few minutes. It's good to see you have picked up your pen/lifted your head off the table/settled down in your seat and are more ready to make a start. Let me remind you of what you needed to do.)

Empathy

- Acknowledge and validate feelings then redirect:
  Acknowledge*: I hear/see that you are not happy about…*
  Validate: *I understand it's hard when…*
  Redirect: *Remember, in our school we are respectful to each other so **when** you… **then** we can look at…*
- Be tolerant but not permissive – remember **high nurture** and **high structure** are key.

Step 5:

There will be times when a P.A.C.E. approach does not result in positive behavioural outcomes within the classroom environment**.** At this point there is a need to seek additional support for children/young people.

Additional support

- Removing the audience can be very helpful, this includes other adults.
- A change of environment may be needed. A space for children/young people to:
    - **Regulate** - time and space to calm down – soothe the brain stem using various strategies which may be outlined in pastoral support/co-regulation plans where relevant.
    - **Relate -** connect with the child/young person – P.A.C.E. may be effective now, without an audience and with time to regulate.
    - **Reason** - reflect and articulate – some learning is needed to move forward, and this can be achieved through P.A.C.E. initially to make the 'connection', then the 'correction' or thinking about alternative behaviours can follow on.
    - **Repair -** problem solve together on how this temporary rupture in the relationship can be repaired – simple apology, restorative conversation, restorative action which may happen in their free time. Once this step is complete there is a fresh start.

Step 6:

Supporting children and young people in a crisis

Sometimes, despite our best efforts, children and young people can become very dysregulated and as a result they will experience a crisis. At this stage, their fight or flight response will be engaged and therefore their 'thinking' brain/ 'higher' brain will be offline. The following are important steps when supporting children/young people in crisis:

- Start by regulating yourself. Ask yourself the following four questions which help you respond and not react:
    - What am I feeling right now?
    - What does the student feel, need or want?
    - How is the environment affecting the young person?
    - How do I best respond?
- Acknowledge that their brain is in flight or fight, so say very little initially and be aware of your body language and tone of voice - 93% of communication is non-verbal.
- Follow any individual pastoral support/co-regulation plans, particularly for vulnerable students who are in crisis.
- Use co-regulation strategies and emotional first aid scripts such as P.A.C.E./Step On (validate and name emotions, connect and use the relationship, use active listening skills - verbal and non-verbal). Keep sentences short, language unambiguous and trauma informed.
- Seek support from one of the young person's five 'trusted, safe adults' as a priority.
- Only attempt to address solutions to problems or any consequences when the student is back at baseline – be aware that returning to baseline can take up to an hour, even when a child/young person 'appears calm.'

Step7:

Restoring and repairing relationships

Aspire Schools recognises that ruptures in relationships are a normal part of very day life. We aim to support all our children/young people to restore and repair ruptures where they inevitably happen from time to time. Taking a restorative approach is the most effective way of restoring and repairing relationships and in Aspire Schools, this is our main objective.

Where specific consequences are needed in addition (this is not always necessary), they will be educational and/or protective.

To facilitate a restorative culture of restoration and repair, we aim to:

- Offer time and space for everyone (staff and students) to reflect and take responsibility, avoiding a blame approach – restorative meetings may need to wait until the next day in some circumstances.
- When the time is right, arrange for planned and appropriately chaired restorative meetings between peers and/or students and staff.
- Use restorative conversations in meetings with a solution focused approach in the form of ***Life Space Interviews***

    - I - Isolate the conversation
    - E - Explore the event from the child/young person's perspective
    - S - Summarise what they have said (reflect)
    - C - Connect feelings and actions/behaviours
    - A - Alternative actions/behaviours discussed
    - P - Plan and practise new behaviours
    - E - Enter back into the routine/classroom

- Help students learn new coping skills/strategies following their transgression – this may involve a short-term intervention.
- Practise ***'unconditional positive regard'*** for all students from all staff, so that they feel a sense of belonging and acceptance following a rupture in relationships.
- Model how to repair relationships, including acknowledging and owning our own mistakes/ misunderstandings/negative feelings as adults and apologising, where appropriate.
- Use a collaborative approach when agreeing a way forward which listens to all involved and makes appropriate compromises.
- Offer limited, but credible, choices for students who struggle to accept consequences and take responsibility for their actions.
- Ensure any additional consequences are either purely ***educational*** or ***protective and educational.***

Appendix II

Confiscation, searches, screening

Searching, screening and confiscation is conducted in line with the DfE's latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Confiscation
Any prohibited items found in a student's possession because of a search will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to the student.

We will also confiscate any item that is harmful or detrimental to school discipline. These items will be returned to students after discussion with senior leaders and parents, if appropriate.

Searching a student
Searches will only be carried out by a member of staff who has been authorised to do so by the Headteacher, or by the Headteacher themselves. The Headteacher has authorised members of the Senior Leadership Team to search.

Subject to the exception below, the authorised member of staff carrying out the search will be of the same sex as the student, and there will be another member of staff present as a witness to the search.

An authorised member of staff of a different sex to the student can carry out a search without another member of staff as a witness, if:

- The authorised member of staff carrying out the search reasonably believes there is risk that serious harm will be caused to a person if the search is not carried out as a matter of urgency; and
- In the time available, it is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out by a member of staff who is the same sex as the student; or
- It is not reasonably practicable for the search to be carried out in the presence of another member of staff.

When an authorised member of staff conducts a search without a witness, they should immediately report this to another member of staff and ensure a written record of the search is kept.

If the authorised member of staff considers a search to be necessary, but is not required urgently, they will seek the advice of the Head of School or Service, designated safeguarding lead (or deputy), or pastoral member of staff, who may have more information about the student. During this time, the student will be supervised and kept away from other students.

A search can be carried out if the authorised member of staff has reasonable grounds for suspecting that the student is in possession of a prohibited item or any item identified in the school rules for which a search can be made, or if the student has agreed.

An appropriate location for the search will be found. Where possible, this will be away from other students. The search will only take place on the school premises or where the member of staff has lawful control or charge of the student, for example on a school trip.

Before carrying out a search the authorised member of staff will:

- Assess whether there is an urgent need for a search
- Assess whether not doing the search would put other students or staff at risk

- Consider whether the search would pose a safeguarding risk to the student
- Explain to the student why they are being searched
- Explain to the student what a search entails
- Explain how and where the search will be carried out
- Give the student the opportunity to ask questions
- Seek the student's co-operation

If the student refuses to agree to a search, the member of staff can give an appropriate behaviour sanction.

If they still refuse to co-operate, the member of staff will contact a member of the Senior Leadership Team or Safeguarding Team, to try and determine why the student is refusing to comply.

The authorised member of staff will then decide whether to use reasonable force to search the student. This decision will be made on a case-by-case basis, taking into consideration whether conducting the search will prevent the student harming themselves or others, damaging property or from causing disorder.

The authorised member of staff can use reasonable force to search for any prohibited items identified, but not to search for items that are only identified in the school rules.

The authorised member of staff may use a metal detector to assist with the search.

An authorised member of staff may search a student's outer clothing, pockets, possessions, desks or lockers.

Outer clothing includes:
- Any item of clothing that is not worn immediately over a garment that is being worn next to the skin or being worn as underwear (e.g. a jumper or jacket being worn over a t-shirt)
- Hats, scarves, gloves, shoes, boots

Searching students' possessions
Possessions means any items that the student has or appears to have control of, including:
- Clothes
- Desks
- Lockers
- Bags

A student's possessions can be searched for any item if the student agrees to the search. If the student does not agree to the search, staff can still carry out a search for prohibited items and items identified in the school rules.

An authorised member of staff can search a student's possessions when the student and another member of staff are present.

If there is a serious risk of harm, if the search is not conducted immediately, or it is not reasonably practicable to summon another member of staff, the search can be carried out by a single authorised member of staff.

Appendix III

Profile and Risk Assessment (Stages of Distress and Support)



Profile and Risk Assessment

Name:

Year Group:

Placement Type:

Educational Needs

Diagnosis:

Allergies/Medical:

Agencies involved:

Stages of Distress & Support		
Stage	**What this looks like…(EXAMPLE)**	**What helps….(EXAMPLE)**
Primary	Positive, friendly interactions, polite, follows instructions	Taking interest in hobbies, positive body language, clear instructions
Anxiety / Trigger	Closed body language, lack of eye contact, hood up, ignoring staff	Positive and energetic body language, relaxed and calm speech, playing football
Defensive / Escalation	Tries to get out of the corridor, go to the toilet	Break out room, reflective conversation, give alternatives
Crisis	Escaping, aggressive tone, short and snappy, verbal abuse	Calm stance, alternative adult, reduce demands on language
Recovery	Subdued, low mood, dropping head, unresponsive	Break out space, reassurance
Depression	Low energy, closed body language	Take an interest in hobbies, talk about football, will respond to calm adult intervention
Restoration	Usually reflective, remorseful	Structured mentoring sessions, target setting

Community /friendship needs:

Profile and Risk Assessment

Date:	Staff Member Completing:				
Actions that should be avoided: eg Do not touch personal belongings					
Overall risk assessment for this student:	A Very High Mostly 5/6	B	C	D	E Minimal Mostly 1

Assessment of Risk

To be completed with someone who knows the student from a previous educational setting. This must be completed before a student starts on-site. This must also be checked and updated termly and after any significant events.

Hazards	Never Sometimes Always	Further info if required e.g. specific triggers	**Likelihood** 1 unlikely 6 certain	**Severity** 1 negligible 6 serious harm
Verbal abuse to peers/adults				
Smokes/vapes onsite				
Brings illegal drugs onto the site				
Physical violence towards peers				
Physical violence towards staff				
Carries weapons				
Attempts to make weapons				
Unpredictable behaviour				
Causes damage to property				
Trashes rooms				
Disruption to classes				
Graffiti				
Absconds				
Steals				
Makes allegations against staff				
Targets other students/staff				
Bullying (in person)				
Bullying (online)				
Incites violence				
Issues in community				
Poor attendance				
Sexualized behaviour				
Unsafe behaviour in car/bus				
Bites/spits				
Grapples/wrestles/pushes				
Head butts				
Kicks/stamps				
Self-harm				
Arson				
Climbs				
Any other relevant/key info:				