



VTC

Behaviour Policy

(Including the statement of
behaviour principles)

Approved by: Sean Cambell &
The Advisory Board

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VTC Behaviour Policy (Including the statement of behaviour principles)

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1. Aims

This policy aims to:

- Provide a consistent approach to behaviour management that applies to all learners depending on their SEMH needs.
- Define what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour, including bullying and discrimination, highlighting the positive behavioral expectations for all.
- Identify any safeguarding concerns and specific factors that give rise to challenging behaviour.
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of different people in the school community with regards to behaviour management
- Outline the principles of positive behaviour support that underpins personal development and behaviour for learning.

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- Define the processes for personalised behaviour plans for all learners with EHCP's or at risk of exclusion or who are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of exclusion.

2. Legislation and statutory requirements

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

- Behaviour and discipline in schools
- Searching, screening and confiscation at school
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- School suspensions and permanent exclusions
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting Learners with medical conditions at school

It is also based on the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.

In addition, this policy is based on:

- Section 175 of the Education Act 2002, which outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of its Learners.
- Sections 88-94 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, which require schools to regulate Learners' behaviour and publish a behaviour policy and written statement of behaviour principles, and give schools the authority to confiscate Learners' property
- Schedule 1 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014; paragraph 7 outlines a school's duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children, paragraph 9 requires the school to have a written behaviour policy and paragraph 10 requires the school to have an anti-bullying strategy

3. Definitions

Low level disruptive behaviour is defined as:

- Disruption in lessons, in corridors between lessons, and at break and lunchtimes
- Non-completion of classwork or homework
- Poor attitude
- Incorrect uniform

Persistent challenging behaviour is defined as:

- Repeated breaches of the school rules
- Any form of bullying
- Sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration, or sexual assault (intentional sexual touching without consent)
- Sexual harassment, meaning unwanted conduct of a sexual nature, such as:
 - Sexual comments
 - Sexual jokes or taunting

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- Physical behaviour like interfering with clothes
- 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.

➤ Vandalism

➤ Theft

➤ Fighting

➤ Smoking

➤ Racist, sexist, homophobic or discriminatory behaviour

➤ Possession of any prohibited items. These are:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco and cigarette papers
- Fireworks
- Pornographic images
- Any article a staff member reasonably suspects has been, or is likely to be, used to commit an offence, or to cause personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the learner)

4. Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of 1 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

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TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic • Transphobic • Disability-based 	Taunts, gestures, graffiti, or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g., gender, race, sexuality)
Sexual	Explicit sexual remarks, display of sexual material, sexual gestures, unwanted physical attention, comments about sexual reputation or performance, or inappropriate touching
Direct or indirect verbal	Name-calling, sarcasm, spreading rumours, teasing
Cyber-bullying	Bullying that takes place online, such as through social networking sites, messaging apps or gaming sites

Details of VTC school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying are set out in our anti-bullying strategy policy.

5. Roles and responsibilities

5.1 Advisory Board

The Advisory Board is responsible for reviewing and approving the written statement of behaviour principles (appendix 1).

The Advisory Board will also review this behaviour policy in conjunction with the headteacher and monitor the policy's effectiveness, holding the headteacher to account for its implementation.

5.2 The headteacher

The headteacher is responsible for reviewing this behaviour policy in conjunction with the advisory board giving due consideration to the school's statement of behaviour principles (appendix 1). The headteacher will also approve this policy.

The headteacher will ensure that the school environment encourages positive behaviour and that staff deal effectively with unacceptable behaviour and will monitor how staff implement this policy for consistency to all learners.

The headteacher will ensure that this behaviour policy works alongside the safeguarding policy to offer learners support when necessary.

The headteacher will ensure that the data from the behaviour log is reviewed on a termly basis, to make sure that all learners are being proportionately impacted by this policy.

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5.3 Staff

Staff are responsible for:

- Implementing the behaviour policy consistently by working with each learner's identified behaviour plans
- Modelling positive behaviour
- Providing a personalised approach to the specific behavioral needs of particular learners
- Recording behaviour incidents on SIMS, Edukey (where safeguarding has been identified), Serious Incident Forms (SEF) and the bound book.

The senior leadership team will support staff in responding to behaviour incidents, but it is everyone member of staff's responsibility to support the process and work a team to reduce the need on hierarchical interventions.

5.4 Parents

Parents are expected to:

- Support their child in adhering to the Learner code of conduct.
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour.
- Discuss any behavioral concerns with the class teacher promptly.
- Work with the school to implement behavioural plans.

6. Learner code of conduct

Learners are expected to:

- Behave in an orderly and self-controlled way.
- Show respect to members of staff and each other.
- In class, make it possible for all learners to learn.
- Move around the school quietly and sensibly.
- Treat the school buildings and school property with respect.
- Wear appropriate clothing.
- Take responsibility for your behavior and accept consequences and take part in restorative discussions.
- Refrain from behaving in a way that brings the school into disrepute, including when outside school.

7. Managing challenging behaviour

7.1 Culture

VTC school is committed to a positive behaviour support culture. We support the behaviour of our learners and young people to improve their quality of life. As we support them through their learning across the curriculum into adult life. We also help them in the way they access friendships, the way they relate to adults and the way they socialise. Supporting

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our learners to cope with disappointment, adapt to change, understand their feelings and finding strategies to cope with anxieties and life's challenges are all part of the education they receive at VTC.

We believe in facilitating and enabling our learners to reach their full potential. For them to do this the learning environment we provide must be safe, supportive, and caring. Our philosophy is centred around nurturing positive behaviour support underpinned by strong and trusting relationships. Our staff communicate with our learners and learners in a way that models good practice to them. All staff are asked to take behaviour for what is and to understand the underlying reasons for their behaviors and the triggers that may lead to challenging behaviour. Our staff and learners are encouraged to take a shared responsibility for the emotional well-being of those around them.

Behaviour is communication and at VTC we encourage a range of opportunities for learner voice. If learners begin to understand the reasons for their behaviour and to be accountable for it, similarly, ensuring that learners are involved in setting the ethos of the schools through the generation of expectations and the way these expectations should be managed and reinforced are key to the success of this policy.

7.2 Expectations

The children need to be faced with clear expectations and boundaries. They will feel safe when they recognize that we all work together for them, and the boundaries hold them secure and that the adults are in charge of themselves and the children. Class rules should be clearly displayed and should emphasise "do's" rather than "don'ts". Learners particularly older learners, should be involved in deciding the rules.

Abusive language and disrespect are unacceptable, and children need to be given the appropriate language and strategies to use. They need to be reminded of the school ethos of respect for yourself and others and dealing with each other in an acceptable manner. If abusive and disrespectful language is not challenged, it becomes accepted and allows for a climate of conflict and hostility to develop.

If a child has become extremely distressed and is out of control and requiring physical intervention, the language used may be regarded somewhat differently. At these times it may be more helpful to ignore any verbal abuse and not to respond to it until the child has gained some level of calm. It is likely that there are other behaviours that need to be addressed at this point and the language is not a priority.

Be in the right place at the right time. This is an important management tool. Children should be taught to always ask before leaving a room and should only visit the place stated. Younger children should also always be accompanied or discreetly monitored by an adult. Older learners should be given opportunities to prove they can be trusted.

- **Rewards and consequences**

Although sanctions have their place and are at times important, there should be an overall emphasis on noticing, praising, celebrating, and rewarding positive behaviours rather than noticing and sanctioning negative behaviours.

This balance fits with an ethos of encouraging good mental health and emotional wellbeing and is particularly important for learners with SEN.

An overly punitive approach can feed into negative cycles of poor self-esteem / negative identity which can result in negative behaviours actually becoming entrenched rather than improved.

Positive behaviour will be rewarded with:

- Praise
- Merit marks

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- Letters, postcards or phone calls home to parents
- Special responsibilities/privileges

The school may use 1 or more of the following consequences in response to unacceptable behaviour:

- A visual or verbal reprimand
- Giving time out within the school
- Expecting work to be completed outside of lessons.
- Referring the learner to a senior member of staff
- Letters or phone calls home to parents
- Specific monitoring of certain behaviors

See appendix 4 for sample letters to parents about their child's behaviour.

7.4 Zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment and sexual violence

The school will ensure that all incidents of sexual harassment and/or violence are met with a suitable response, and never ignored.

Learners are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be.

The school's response will be:

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

Sanctions for sexual harassment and violence will take into account the severity, the underlying needs of each learner involved and the advice from safeguarding colleagues:

The school has procedures in place to respond to any allegations or concerns regarding a child's safety or wellbeing. These include clear processes for:

- Responding to a report
- Carrying out risk assessments, where appropriate, to help determine whether to:
 - Manage the incident internally.
 - Refer to early help.
 - Refer to children's social care.
 - Report to the police.

Please refer to our child protection, safeguarding policy and peer on peer abuse policies for more information

7.5 Off-site behaviour

Consequences may be applied where a learner has misbehaved off-site when representing the school. This means misbehaviour when the learner is:

A handwritten quote in cursive script that reads 'Attitude is Everything'.

- Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity (e.g., school trips)
- Travelling to or from school
- In any other way identifiable as a learner at our school

Consequences may also be applied where a learner has misbehaved off-site at any time, whether or not the conditions above apply, if the misbehaviour:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- Poses a threat to another learner or member of the public.
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school.

Consequences will only be given out on school premises or elsewhere when the learner is under the lawful control of the staff member (e.g., on a school-organised trip).

7.6 Malicious allegations

When a learner makes an allegation against a member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will work within the safeguarding policy to resolve the issue.

Where a learner makes an allegation of sexual violence or sexual harassment against another learner and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will discipline the learner in accordance with this policy.

In all cases where an allegation is determined to be unsubstantiated, unfounded, false, or malicious, the school (in collaboration with the local authority designated officer, where relevant) will consider whether the learner who made the allegation is in need of help, or the allegation may have been a cry for help. If so, a referral to children's social care may be appropriate.

The school will also consider the pastoral needs of staff and learners accused of misconduct.

Please refer to our child protection and safeguarding policy for more information on responding to allegations of abuse against staff or other learners.

8. Behaviour management

VTC will reinforce positive principles through the following strategies:

- Developing a positive environment
- Implementing a positive culture
- Providing a fit for purpose and positive curriculum that motivates and includes all learners.
- Using positive language
- Ensuring positive outcomes
- Embedding positive behaviour support

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8.1 Classroom management

Teaching and support staff are responsible for setting the tone and context for positive behaviour within the classroom.

They will:

- Create and maintain a stimulating environment that encourages learners to be engaged.
- Display the learner code of conduct and expectations.
- Establishing clear routines and structures
- Develop a positive relationship with learners, which may include:
 - Greeting learners in the morning/at the start of lessons
 - Communicating expectations of behaviour in ways other than verbally
 - Highlighting and promoting and modelling good behaviour
 - Concluding the day (and lessons) positively and starting the next day afresh
 - Having quality individual behaviour plans for each learner
 - Using positive reinforcement
 - Have a restorative approach to resolving conflict.

8.2 Removal from classrooms

Staff will only ask learners to leave the classroom (or on some occasions- the school building) once other behavioural strategies have been attempted unless the behaviour is so extreme as to warrant immediate removal. This process should not escalate the situation, so physical intervention will only be used under unsafe circumstances. If learners refuse to leave the classroom, then all others will be asked to leave, and the situation will be dynamically risk assessed once this has been achieved.

8.3 Physical restraint

In some circumstances, staff may use reasonable force to restrain a learner to prevent them:

- Causing disorder
- Hurting themselves or others
- Damaging property

Incidents of physical restraint must:

- **Always be used as a last resort.**
- Be applied using the minimum amount of force and for the minimum amount of time possible.
- Be used in a way that maintains the safety and dignity of all concerned.
- Never be used as a form of punishment.
- Be recorded and reported to parents (Bound book)

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8.4 Confiscation

Any prohibited items (listed in section 3) found in Learners' possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to learners.

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

Searching and screening learners is conducted in line with the DfE's [latest guidance on searching, screening and confiscation](#). However, at VTC searching will usually only ask learners to empty the contents of their pockets / bags. Any more invasive searches will always be carried out by other agencies such as the police under the presence of an appropriate adult.

8.5 Learner support

The school recognises its legal duty under the Equality Act 2010 to prevent learners with a protected characteristic from being at a disadvantage. Consequently, our approach to challenging behaviour will be differentiated to cater for the SEMH needs of the learners who all fall into the protected characteristic of SEND.

The school's SLT will evaluate a learner who exhibits challenging behaviour to determine whether they have any underlying needs that are not currently being met.

Where necessary, support and advice will also be sought from specialist therapeutic input (counsellors, Forensic OT), educational psychologist, medical practitioners and/or others, to identify or support specific needs.

As a specialist SEMH resource we continually liaise with external agencies and plan support programs for all learners at VTC, as well as working with parents to create the plan and review it on a regular basis.

8.6 Safeguarding

The school recognises that changes in behaviour may be an indicator that a learner is in need of help or protection. We will consider whether a learner's misbehavior may be linked to their suffering, or being likely to suffer, significant harm. Where this may be the case, we will follow our child protection and safeguarding policy.

9. Learner transition

To ensure a smooth transition to the next year/ or phase of education, learners will be supported through annual reviews and other supportive arrangements with other agencies including parents/guardians. Learner voice is encouraged at all times.

10. Training

Our staff are provided with training in managing behaviour, including de-escalation, positive interactions and alternatives to restraint. The school has a Physical Intervention Policy which in summary argues against and restraint unless there are no alternatives, e.g., a member of staff or learner is attacked, and people are put at risk of serious injury. In this case interventions need to be commensurate and reasonable with the situation. Wherever possible, the learner should be given a way out of the situation and calm down to avoid any intervention. Training is given annually to all staff with regard to de-escalation, and any physical intervention.

Behaviour management will also form part of continuing professional development.

A staff training log can be found in appendix 2.

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11. Monitoring arrangements

This behaviour policy will be reviewed by the headteacher and Advisory Board at least annually, or more frequently, if needed, to address findings from the regular monitoring of the behaviour on a termly basis (SIMS and Bound book) At each review, the policy will be approved by the Headteacher.

12. Links with other policies

This behaviour policy is linked to the following policies:

- Exclusions policy
- Child protection and safeguarding policy
- Anti-bullying policy
- Restrictive Physical Intervention Policy
- Child on child abuse
- Mentoring

Appendix 1: written statement of behaviour principles

This written statement of behaviour principles is reviewed and approved by the Advisory Board annually.

Behavioural principles at VTC are underpinned by the following objectives.

- Positive behaviour support and environment which will allow learners, staff, and the organisation to grow and improve with emphasis on personal accountability and building self-esteem.
- A range of personalised approaches to learner needs which highlights and ensures that all can achieve.
- Social, emotional, and mental health development interventions are a priority to ensuring that the root causes of behaviour are understood and planned for with precise interventions and strategies.
- Access and engagement ensuring the barriers to learning are challenged and removed with skilful insight and allowing learners to succeed rather than be frustrated.
- Equality and inclusive allowing all needs to be met by a creative provision and curriculum which is accessed by differentiated, personalised teaching and learning styles.
- Keeping learner safe is addressed in relation to variety of contexts and is embedded in all activities and is particularly relevant to safeguarding in relation to their SEMH and ASD needs.
-
- Transition and preparation for adult life to improve learner attitudes towards future expectations and prepare learners to cope with the demands of adult life in their local community to improve their chances of success and raise self-esteem.
- Community involvement to maximise opportunities for home/ school/ community liaison and to work towards agreed community outcomes which feed into the mission statement outcomes.

The principles are played out in the following positive ways:

- Creating a culture and environment which is positive, supportive, and non-judgemental.
- Ensuring all needs are met through a range of interventions and strategies allied to an accessible curriculum.
- Placing a heavy emphasis on understanding the reasons for the ways learners present themselves and staff being able to relate positively.
- Putting emphasis on emotional literacy, wellbeing and support including a nurturing approach; adults also need to be self-aware of their own emotional state and its impact on situations.
- The school is intent on developing quality therapeutic input for the learners to overcome barriers to their SEMH needs.
- Facilitating strong relationships between staff and learners to gain trust.
- Our behavioural policy does not talk about control but about placing the locus of control with the learners and that is based on agreed expectations and restorative approaches.
- A Child Centred philosophy puts the learners at the centre of learning and development and therefore a personalised offer is desirable at every potential opportunity.

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- We believe behaviour is communication and that we need to understand what is being communicated before reacting to the behaviour.
- The school does have expectations such as all staff and learners to be kind, respectful and courteous at all times.
- Expectations will not always be maintained, and appropriate, measured consequences will be used to resolve situations that arise from these incidents.
- Conflict resolution and restorative outcomes are useful ways to reflect on actions and the consequences that should be put in place, usually by the learners who have gone against expectations.
- The school is skilled in reducing behaviour that is disruptive through skilled input including de-escalation, re-direction and distraction techniques based on positive relationships.
- Any positive handling is a very last resort with every avenue tried to circumvent these actions, including having clear alternative plans that learners can follow, which are then risk assessed.
- The school is a safe environment and any issues putting safety at risk is dealt with quickly and justly.
- The school aims to ensure the learners have the skills to manage their behaviours and needs in out of school environments and take responsibility for the actions and behaviours in school and in the community and the world of work.

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Appendix 2: staff training log

TRAINING RECEIVED	DATE COMPLETED	TRAINER / TRAINING ORGANISATION	TRAINER'S SIGNATURE	STAFF MEMBER'S SIGNATURE	SUGGESTED REVIEW DATE

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Appendix 3: behaviour log

LEARNER'S NAME:	
LEARNER'S KNOWN PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS:	
NAME OF STAFF MEMBER REPORTING THE INCIDENT:	
DATE:	
WHERE DID THE INCIDENT TAKE PLACE?	
WHEN DID THE INCIDENT TAKE PLACE? (BEFORE SCHOOL, AFTER SCHOOL, LUNCHTIME, BREAK TIME)	
WHAT HAPPENED?	
WHO WAS INVOLVED?	
WHAT ACTIONS WERE TAKEN, INCLUDING ANY SANCTIONS?	
IS ANY FOLLOW-UP ACTION NEEDED? IF SO, GIVE DETAILS	
PEOPLE INFORMED OF THE INCIDENT (STAFF, ADVISORY BOARD, PARENTS, POLICE):	

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Appendix 4: letters to parents about learner behaviour – templates

First behaviour letter:

Dear parent,

Recently, your child _____ has not been behaving as well in school as they could.

It is important that your child understands the need to follow our learner code of conduct, and I would appreciate it if you could discuss their behaviour with them.

If your child's behaviour does not improve, I will contact you again and suggest that we meet to discuss how we can work together. However, at this stage I am confident that a reminder of how to behave appropriately will be sufficient.

Yours sincerely,

Class teacher name: _____

Class teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Behaviour letter – return slip.

Please return this slip to school to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of child: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

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Second behaviour letter:

Dear parent,

Following my previous letter regarding the behaviour of _____, I am sorry to say that they are still struggling to adhere to our learner code of conduct.

I would appreciate it if you could arrange to meet me after school so we can discuss a way forward.

Please email on office@vtcindependentschool.co.uk or ring on 01795899240

Yours sincerely,

Class teacher name: _____

Class teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Third behaviour letter:

Dear parent,

I am sorry to report that, despite meeting and creating a behaviour contract, _____ has continued to misbehave.

_____ would now benefit from a structured approach to help improve their behaviour in school.

I would be grateful if you could attend a meeting with the headteacher, the special educational needs coordinator and myself, to discuss how we can best support your child in improving their behaviour. Please email on office@vtcindependentschool.co.uk or ring on 01795899240

Yours sincerely,

Class teacher name: _____

Class teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Detention letter:

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Dear parent,

I am writing to inform you that _____ has been given a detention on this date _____ at this time _____.

The reason(s) for this detention are set out below.

If you need to see me about this matter, please call the school to make an appointment.

Yours sincerely,

Class teacher name: _____

Class teacher signature: _____

Date: _____

Detention letter – return slip.

Please return this slip to school to confirm you have received this letter. Thank you.

Name of child: _____

Parent name: _____

Parent signature: _____

Date: _____

Review of procedure

This procedure will be reviewed annually.
