

Behaviour Support Policy (Including Sanctions, Rewards & Use of Restraint)

Last Review March 2026	Next Review March 2027	Review Frequency Every Year	Coordinator Head of Group Living	Nominated Trustees EC&T Committee
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INTRODUCTION

The policy covers the following sections:-

- Section 1. General guidance on working with challenging behaviour.
- Section 2. Guidance on the use of sanctions and boundaries to promote positive behaviour.
- Section 3. Use of Restrictive Interventions (including Reasonable Force).
- Section 4. Additional guidance for staff working in Education.
- Section 5. Monitoring incidents, use of reasonable force and restraint and room searches.

It is essential that the approach to working with challenging behaviour is matched to the individual child's level of understanding and ability to make use of the approach. This requires staff teams to discuss and plan appropriate, helpful approaches to individuals within each group. These are then identified in each child's Integrated Treatment Plan (ITP), within their Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan. There will be an ongoing dialogue within teams, informed by current experiences alongside each child to ensure that approaches to individuals and to the group coexist effectively, as both are essential.

The underlying belief of the Mulberry Bush School is that children are most likely to adapt their behaviour positively when:

- Expectations are clear and achievable;
- They feel valued and cared for;
- They receive regular praise and positive feedback;
- They feel they are being successful;
- They receive consistent messages from staff, their families and carers, and their external networks;
- They feel understood.

This policy should be read alongside the Safeguarding Policy, the Staff Handbook, and the Code of Conduct.

DEFINITIONS

Restrictive Intervention

This includes any action that limits a child's movement, liberty or independence – whether physical or non-physical.

Seclusion

Seclusion is a restrictive intervention and refers to the supervised confinement of a pupil in a room or area from which they are prevented from leaving, whether by physical means or by instruction, for the purpose of preventing harm or serious disorder, not as a behavioural consequence or sanction.

Significant Incident

A significant incident is any occurrence involving the use of restrictive intervention, including restraint, seclusion or non-force related restriction, which must be recorded and reported in line with statutory guidance. At MBS we use the term 'significant incident' for the form that we use to record RPI as well as targeted behaviour, repeated behaviours that feel significant within their nature, an example would be bullying, sexualised behaviour and physical aggression.

DUAL REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

The Mulberry Bush School operates within both the statutory framework for children's homes and the statutory guidance for schools. Practice relating to behaviour support, physical intervention and separation from peers is therefore guided by the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and associated quality standards, alongside Department for Education guidance on restrictive interventions in schools updated in April 2026. Please see annex A for full details of the legislative and Regulatory Framework.

Any time a child spends away from the group is a **supervised, supportive and therapeutic intervention**, used to restore emotional regulation and safety, and never as a punishment or disciplinary sanction.

This approach is consistent with education guidance on restrictive interventions, which recognises that non-physical separation may only be used where it is necessary, proportionate and in the child's best interests. Across both frameworks, the School is committed to minimising restrictive practices, prioritising prevention and de-escalation, and ensuring that any intervention is relational, time limited, closely monitored and subject to reflection, learning and oversight.

AIMS

This policy is intended to help staff carry out tasks to create and maintain a safe environment for all, with a specific focus on working with challenging behaviour, maintaining a therapeutic environment and within this ensuring good order and discipline so that children can learn and reach their full potential.

SECTION 1.

GENERAL GUIDANCE ON WORKING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIOUR

We believe that children communicate their thoughts and feelings through their behaviour. We have a responsibility to try to understand what they are telling us even though this may not be immediately apparent. Children often have a clear sense of what they “need” which may be expressed as a “want” which can leave others with difficult feelings. It is important to look beyond these feelings and try to connect with the underlying reasons the child may be behaving in a particular way. This behaviour is often the result of coping strategies developed over time.

The experience of living and learning in groups with and alongside the children forms the main therapeutic provision. Children are provided with a highly structured living and learning experience individually and in groups. The combination of relationships, structure, routine, clear boundaries and opportunities for thinking together promotes the development of positive, healthy, safe ways of relating to others.

All staff joining the school are provided with a comprehensive induction which includes discussion of the therapeutic work and supports staff to consider behaviour as communication. All front-line staff complete a Level 5 Foundation Degree in Therapeutic Childcare: -

<https://mulberrybush.org.uk/eventstraining/foundation-degree-fda-in-therapeutic-work-with-children-and-young-people/>

All staff are trained in Team Teach strategies to manage challenging behaviour. Once trained staff take part in practice sessions every 3-4 weeks. Practice sessions focus on emerging themes, children’s individual plans, triggers, de-escalation techniques, stages of distress and restrictive physical intervention.

1. Anticipate and prevent

Get to know each child well: a strong relationship based on trust and respect is one of the most effective preventative measures. Know the content of their Integrated Treatment Plan, including their Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan;

Involve the children: in decisions about their care and treatment and about reasonable limits appropriate to each child's age and understanding;

Teach by example: model respect for the children and for each other in all of our work;

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

Be consistent: all members of staff should endeavour to maintain consistent and fair limits around children's behaviour and find out about the limits the child is used to at home and elsewhere;

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

Work as a Team: make use of your team and the child's Treatment Team to avoid unnecessary conflict and engage in ways that help the child think and be regulated;

Praise and positively reinforce behaviour whenever possible: remember you generally "get more of what you talk about." Promote positive behaviour through feedback, celebrations and rewards such as special activities, certificates etc. Genuine pride in and enjoyment alongside children when they achieve may be the best recognition.

2. When things become difficult, what helps?

No single approach or technique is helpful in all situations for all children. Pay attention to the child and do what helps them, here and now. Use strategies included in the child's Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan.

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

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

Recognise the child's feelings: it may be unreasonable for the child to kick, bite or scream but it is not unreasonable for them to feel cross or unhappy. Confirm the feeling with/for the child and help find acceptable ways to express the feelings.

Many of our children struggle to label their feelings. The Mulberry Bush recognises that Emotion Coaching is one useful framework for this area of work.

Try to avoid head-on conflict: try distraction or compromise - defuse the situation wherever you can and reduce the risk of escalation. Relaxed humour is helpful on occasions.

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

Set clear, simple expectations they can achieve:

STOP or CHANGE the activity. Be clear and confident

Give clear examples, "Now we are...., Next we will...."

Keep language simple and clear, focus and repeat the desired outcome. What do you want the child to do?

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

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

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

Say "We need to think about what has happened"

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

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

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

- Move confidently but calmly
- Make simple clear statements to the child
- Make sure your voice is quiet, firm and assured

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

Reduce the threat of your presence: by sitting, kneeling or giving space for the child to move about. If you are challenging the child, it can help to avoid direct eye contact. It is important to remember your circle of danger.

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

3. When things become difficult, what doesn't help?

Don't take it personally or make it personal.

Don't try to deal with situations if you feel out of your depth: ask for help or ideas or advice.

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

During the incident is not the time to be putting in sanctions, this should wait until the situation is calm and all involved can effectively participate.

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

Don't raise your voice as a routine response, nor give complicated garbled messages with a high-pitched voice.

Don't try to sort things out by **bombarding the child** with statements and questions, loudly or harshly put.

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

SECTION 2.

GUIDANCE ON THE USE OF SANCTIONS AND BOUNDARIES TO PROMOTE POSITIVE BEHAVIOUR

A person who has to endure punishment provides himself with protection... a "tough crust" in order that our violence, whether physical or not, shall hurt him as little as possible... But our work is not concerned with the tough crust- it is with the soft core. We can never reach that core while we are provoking the subject to a hardening of his "crust".

David Wills The Hawkspur experiment.

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

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

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

Good Sanctions Practice:

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

Sanctions should:

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

- be reviewed periodically.

Staff members should aim to:

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

Communication is key in making this approach work – information has to pass from adult to adult, from shift to shift and from team to team so each person can make judgements.

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

Poor Sanctions Practice:

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

Staff members should avoid:

- Words like “grounding” and “ban.”
- Children “doing their time.” etc.
- A rigid time for a sanction to last.

- A broad sanction (no use of electronics, no going in vehicles).

It is the school's policy that **children will be included in any educational or planned activity outside of school if they are safe and able to do so** – these things are not withdrawn as part of a particular sanction. If a child being part of a regular activity does not fit with appropriate boundaries or their Integrated Treatment Plan, the activity will be discussed by the Treatment Team and may be withdrawn, changed or substituted following appropriate discussion with the child.

Sanctions used include:

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

Missing playtime or Fun Finish in class to catch up on missed school work or address issues of negative behaviour in class. (This may or may not be recorded as a sanction depending on its use).

Not being allowed to use specific pieces of equipment following their misuse e.g. no use of computers until reparation done, or not attending a sports activity following inappropriate or dangerous behaviour.

Early bedtime e.g. as a consequence of a difficult bedtime the night before, for being aggressive during the day, or at the end of a generally difficult day. Note that a difficult bedtime may well be more usefully addressed the following day, in preparation for a better bedtime.

Attend a **Panel Meeting** following high levels of unacceptable or concerning behaviour. A panel meeting is convened by somebody with some emotional distance from the child who is not directly impacted by their behaviour. It will have a clear focus on setting expectations around a particular behaviour, relationship or challenging aspect of daily routine, and agreeing plans to support a change in that behaviour. It may be relatively firm in tone and present with clear authority but will always aim to support change through clear expectations and appropriate authority, not through intimidation. A child will be accompanied by a supporting adult who can help them make best use of the panel meeting. The panel meeting may meet once or may meet regularly for a period of time.

Time away from the group or activity. Any time away from the group must be to support the child to regulate, to reflect on what has happened and to consider how they can rejoin the group safely and make things better. Where a child is supported away from the group, adults should ensure that the child understands what the expectations are and why this decision has been made. In Education, removal from

the class as a sanction will be recorded on ClearCare if a restrictive physical intervention is used. Time away from the group is an agreed strategy, with individual networks and part of the child's Individual treatment plan. The child will have a supporting adult with them to ensure that the child is closely supported.

The Mulberry Bush uses the Team Teach framework for the approach to positive behaviour, de-escalation and restrictive physical intervention. Within this, the legal terminology for Time away from group is 'Withdrawal', meaning, 'moving someone to a safer place where they can be monitored and closely supervised'. At the Mulberry bush, we refer to this as 'Time away from the group'.

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

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

Limited to the school / to the house / to the house and garden (not including class time or after school clubs). This would be the result of a child behaving in a very uncontained manner over a period of a few days, or as a result of specific behaviour such as jumping out of a higher window, climbing on a roof or leaving the school grounds without permission. A child briefly stepping over the school boundary, climbing a low fence or going through an open ground floor window opening onto a garden will not lead to this kind of sanction. Where a child has moved out of bounds but has done so as part of self-regulating or struggling not to act out in more dangerous ways, this will be discussed among the adults and with the child.

Exclusion is used only rarely and in exceptional circumstances. It will only be used following discussion among staff including senior managers.

1. Internal exclusion for 24 hours – this means being supervised 1:1 in a place away from the other children following a very serious incident e.g. setting the fire alarm off, going off site without permission/missing/absent or serious physical assault. If this is during Education time, class work will be provided.
2. Fixed term or permanent exclusion (see Exclusion Policy).

Monitoring of sanctions:

Major sanctions include limited use of vehicles, limited use of equipment, limited to house / house and garden / site, panel meetings. These are monitored for appropriateness of use and are recorded on the Clear Care online recording system.

Prohibited Sanctions:

In accordance with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 19(2) the following measures may not be used to discipline any child -

- (a) any form of corporal punishment;
- (b) any punishment involving the consumption or deprivation of food or drink;
- (c) any restriction, other than one imposed by a court or in accordance with regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), on—
 - (i) a child's contact with parents, relatives or friends;
 - (ii) visits to the child by the child's parents, relatives or friends;
 - (iii) a child's communications with any persons listed in regulation 22(1) (contact and access to communications); or
 - (iv) a child's access to any internet-based or telephone helpline providing counselling for children;
- (d) the use or withholding of medication, or medical or dental treatment;
- (e) the intentional deprivation of sleep;
- (f) imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation;
- (g) any intimate physical examination; (*see intimate search section in the Intimate Care Policy, p.4*)
- (h) withholding any aids or equipment needed by a disabled child;
- (i) any measure involving a child imposing any measure against another child; or
- (j) any measure involving punishing a group of children for the behaviour of an individual child.

In relation to (i) above, the therapeutic community approach requires groups to be encouraged and supported to discuss their members behaviour, its impact on the group and its members, ways of resolving conflict and what actions individuals need to take to restore their relationships in the group. This is not children imposing measures against each other, this is adults facilitating a group process while maintaining appropriate authority. It is part of the adult role in a therapeutic community for children to facilitate, moderate and if needed direct these processes.

In addition, the following are prohibited by law:

- The locking of a child or children in a single room at any time, even when accompanied by a responsible adult or adults;

- The locking of internal doors to confine a child or children in certain sections, even when accompanied by an adult or adults (locking of external doors in order to provide safety for the children and prevent unauthorized persons from accessing the building is permitted).
- Seclusion is 'forcing a person to spend time alone'. At the Mulberry Bush no child is forced to spend time alone as a consequence of challenging behaviour or as a punishment. Any separation from the child group is in the company of or close proximity to an adult.

In addition, the School itself prohibits the use of the following:

- threats of unacceptable punishments;
- any verbal abuse intended to humiliate or degrade a child, his/her family or other important person – whether in relation to race, sex, religion or any other respect;
- removal of curriculum entitlement for any reason other than health and safety;
- removal of rewards that have already been earned;
- being asked to change into pyjamas before 5.30pm;
- the whole group being sanctioned as the result of individual children's behaviour.

Measures to combat bullying: see bullying policy.

SECTION 3.

Restrictive Intervention (including reasonable force)

It should always be remembered that when working with challenging behaviour, interventions of any nature should be in the best interests of the child, reasonable, proportionate and necessary. All children at The Mulberry Bush School have specific, individual vulnerabilities that should be considered in deciding whether or not to physically intervene.

The Mulberry Bush School uses the Team Teach system of positive behaviour management. The school follows the approach, guidance and ethos of Team Teach in all matters relating to the use of restraint and the use of reasonable force. Within this training, staff working directly alongside the children are supported to recognise the differences between using positive touch as part of their professional relationships with children and, knowing when to implement contingent touch (from the Team Teach framework) to support a child who may place themselves or others at risk.

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

Using reasonable force and / or restraining a child who is out of control can offer a sense of security and can help the child feel you are able to control the situation with care and concern, but this is only when the intervention is of a non-aggressive nature, however firm it must be.

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

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

At times, it may be permissible for a member of staff to act outside of the Team Teach framework to reduce significant risk of harm to the child or others. Staff may, at times, use their relationships to offer idiosyncratic touch (deep pressure hugs) to a child. Staff must evidence how they used their professional judgement, how it was in the best interest of the child and, be clear of a withdrawal plan should the child's behaviour then escalate. Individual risk assessments should be updated to reflect this.

Staff using reasonable force must remember:

- To ensure that one person takes the lead in talking to the child during the interventions. This can avoid creating further confusion.
- After any restrictive physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this needs recording on the report.

- Incidents of reasonable force or restraint are recorded within 24 hours using ClearCare (on-line recording system)
- To ensure that any appropriate amendments are made to the child's Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plan.
- Reasonable force / restraint can only be used by a member of staff who is trained in the use of Team Teach or if reasonable force is required in an unforeseeable event.
- Reasonable force / restraint should only be used if a child is in danger of hurting her/himself, yourself or another person; causing serious damage to property; committing an offence; or, **only in Education**, causing disorder among pupils, whether during a teaching session or otherwise.
- Reasonable force / restraint should only be used if other forms of intervention have been tried and preventative steps are unsuccessful. These may include positive physical touch, talking, comforting, calming, withdrawing yourself from the situation.
- Remember reasonable force / restraint are defensive protective techniques. They should never be used offensively.
- Reasonable force / restraint should only be used until the child is calming down (no longer than absolutely necessary).
- The event must be recorded afterwards. Time should be allowed to calm and to evaluate the incident. Any use of reasonable force must be recorded within 24 hours.

All staff are trained to identify positional asphyxia and should ensure that practitioners monitor risk both during the restraint and afterwards.

SECTION 4.

ADDITIONAL GUIDANCE FOR STAFF WORKING IN EDUCATION

This policy applies to all staff working in The Mulberry Bush School. However, some additional guidance is required for staff working in Education.

Education staff need to manage behaviour well so that they can provide **calm, safe and supportive environments** where children can **learn and thrive**.

All children at The Mulberry Bush School need support to manage their behaviour. We expect but do not tolerate a range of lower-level behaviours that would be exceptional in other education settings, including swearing, throwing objects to the floor, rudeness, refusal. Adults should respond to these behaviours based on their knowledge of the children and their relationships, as described throughout this policy.

These lower-level behaviours are not specifically recorded but are discussed with children's treatment teams regularly. Persistently challenging lower-level behaviours are also considered in depth in our SEN Drop-In sessions, where teachers meet individually with the school's Educational Psychologist, Speech Therapist and SENCO.

There are embedded routines throughout each day, and these are clearly shared with the children through visual timetables and daily reinforcement. Routines may be individualised, for example some children may spend time with a key adult before entering the classroom, or may use a sensory circuit prior to writing. Routines can also be adapted based on emerging or changing need.

Transition between house and class is an important part of each day and a particular challenge for many children. Children are expected to walk to class, showing that they are ready to learn. A more playful transition may be used when moving back to the houses. Verbal handovers between Group Living and Education teams at each transition are an essential part of a positive transition; children are expected to hear these handovers calmly.

Children are expected to follow adults' instructions and to remain in class during learning time. However, many children find this difficult and the Shifford Team is available at all times to provide additional support beyond the classroom. Much of the work of Shifford is responsive to presenting behaviours 'in the moment', based on the team's knowledge of individual children and their Risk Assessments. For some children who are persistently out of class, Shifford has specific plans, developed with the class teams, that enable children to regulate before returning to the classroom to work.

Staff use a range of techniques to respond to good behaviour. Verbal praise is a key response and should be specific and individual – positive feedback should be included in children's verbal handovers between teams. Some classes also use sticker charts, positions of responsibility, and whole-class rewards.

Misbehaviour is responded to as described throughout this policy, with the priority during Education time being to ensure the safety of pupils and staff and to restore a calm environment where children can learn and thrive. De-escalation techniques are

essential in preventing further behaviour issues arising. Staff think carefully together, and with children, about ways to reduce the likelihood of behaviours recurring. Staff must always use their knowledge of children's individual circumstances and their Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plans in responding to misbehaviour.

Removal from the classroom may be necessary if the child's behaviour poses significant risk of harm to themselves, other children or adults. Staff will follow Team Teach guidance on removing a child safely. Time outside the classroom will be used to support the child to regulate, to reflect on the incident, and to get back into the classroom as soon as possible. This is considered to be a significant incident and recorded on the school's systems, including ClearCare and the daily handover notes. Given the residential nature of the school, and the level of challenging behaviour presented by all pupils who attend, we do not believe it would be helpful for children or their families for each occasion of removal from a classroom to be notified to parents on the same day. School staff have regular discussions with parents and carers about children's behaviours, and any repeated or unusual behaviours will be noted.

In addition to the sanctions described in Section 2, sanctions in Education may include verbal reprimand, loss of privileges, repairing damage caused. Sanctions will never include asking children to complete additional work (e.g. providing a written account of their actions) or detention. Following any sanction, there will be a targeted discussion with the child that includes talking about what went wrong and how the child and adults can work together to avoid this behaviour recurring. Children are always reassured that adults will care for them regardless of their behaviour.

In line with the updated guidance, seclusions are not considered a sanction, and these are recorded on Clear Care using the 'Education - Sanction Form'.

Occasionally, children may be asked to complete work outside of the classroom, but due to the children's prior experience of education, we emphasise the importance of being in the classroom to learn.

All aspects of this policy are relevant whether on the school site or on a school trip, or off site for any other reason.

As the school operates within a residential setting, incidents involving restrictive physical intervention (RPI) are shared at the end of the school day with the group living team who support the children during the afternoon and evening. Relevant information is also shared with the children's networks via FNP Practitioners. In

addition, weekly handover summaries are provided to the children's networks, offering an overview of incidents and patterns over time.

It is recognised that sharing detailed reports of RPI within very short timescales can be overwhelming for children and those within their networks. The work of the Mulberry Bush is relationship centred, and immediate receipt of RPI reports without the opportunity for reflection, explanation and relational processing may be distressing or unsettling.

Therefore, information sharing is undertaken in a way that balances statutory recording and reporting requirements with the emotional wellbeing of children and families ensuring that incidents are communicated thoughtfully, purposefully and with appropriate opportunities for discussion and support.

SECTION 5.

MONITORING INCIDENTS OF USE OF REASONABLE FORCE AND RESTRAINT

All incidents of use of reasonable force and restraint are logged (see standardising logging and recording policy) and transferred weekly onto a whole school tracking sheet. Incidents are recorded separately for Group Living and Education for the purposes of monitoring and analysis (since January 2023).

Records should:

- **Be recorded within 24 hours**
- Use the systems and structure identified in the Standardising Logging and Recording Policy.
- Be factual and objective.
- Be dated.
- Inform Risk Assessment and Positive Handling Plans.
- Identify the antecedents to the incident, including any de-escalation strategies used.
- Provide clear justification for the use of restrictive physical intervention.
- Demonstrate the shared thinking and learning following each incident.
- After any physical intervention a visual check of the child needs to be completed to check for injuries and ensure any medical treatment that is required is actioned and this check, with any outcome, needs recording on the report.
- If there is any concern about a child's wellbeing, or if they express concern about their own wellbeing, the child will be seen by the school nurse. The school nurse will record the details of checks and outcome on the incident

report and a medical event form. If appropriate the nurse will document marks, injuries etc using a body map.

- Debriefs will be held if an Advanced Team Teach restraint has been used to support a child.
- All incidents recorded on the SI/RPI form will be debriefed. Ideally, this will happen face to face, however, at times, this may not be possible and will be followed up via email or telephone. All those involved in the significant incident and/or restrictive physical intervention should be provided with a debrief to learn and develop practice. This may be carried out formally or informally
- In all incidents of restraint, the child should be given the opportunity to go through the incident with a staff member. This needs to take place within 5 days of the incident.
- A key part of going through the incident with the child is about listening to and capturing the child's experience of restraint and involving them in thinking about strategies that may help them in the future.
- Any restraint resulting in a ground hold must lead to medical checks at 5, 30 and 60 minutes after the end of the incident.
- All incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny.
- Restraints are monitored weekly by Head of Group Living and Deputy Head of Group Living (and Head Teacher, from January 2023) and half termly by the Trustees and Team Teach as well as part of the monthly monitoring under Regulation 44.
- The LADO is consulted where the use of restraint becomes a concern. All records are archived along with current policy and guidance.

Room Searches

This includes:

- Articles which children may bring into school without adult approval, and which are an actual or potential danger, or which are causing a disruption may be removed. The reasons should be explained clearly to the child.
- These items, while remaining the property of the child, can then be placed in a secure place, and returned home on the next possible occasion if a parent/carer is willing to accept them. Dangerous items such as knives and matches may be disposed of in other ways if parents/carers agree.
- If it is suspected that such items are concealed in their room or held on the child, staff should try to obtain the child's cooperation to hand the items to staff. If the child is unable or unwilling to cooperate it may be necessary to conduct a search of the child's room or the pockets of the child's outer clothing. Before conducting such a search, the staff member must consult a manager on site or on-call manager and the child's Social Worker / Evening Duty Team or parent if the child does not have a Social Worker. There should

be two staff present when a search is conducted, and the child should be encouraged to be present. A written record of the search should be made on ClearCare and must include the following: -

- The time and date of the search
- The reason or suspicions that led to the need for a search
- Who conducted the search and whether the child was present
- Whether the child cooperated
- What was found and whether items were confiscated
- If items were confiscated, where were they stored

ROLE OF STAFF

To be familiar with this policy.

To act as role-models, teaching and modelling expected behaviour and positive relationships.

To ensure that behaviour management in the school is an active process that anticipates the children's needs and meets these where possible before acting out behaviour becomes extreme.

To ensure that any measure of discipline or control is used with thought and care in the best interest of the child(ren).

To reflect on their own practice and to be a critical friend to colleagues.

To contribute to developing best practice, including being open to changing and improving their own practice on an ongoing basis.

ROLE OF THE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The management team needs to know and understand what is happening in the school, including the way individual children are supported, how groups are contained and what interventions, sanctions, approaches and relationships are in place to support positive behaviour. This involves ensuring sufficient oversight, monitoring and accountability.

The Lead Team Teach Tutor (Practice Development Practitioner) has delegated responsibility to monitor and lead the development of best practice in behaviour management including physical interventions and use of restraint. This is not their responsibility alone; their role is to provide internal consultation and observation alongside close-in support and guidance.

Treatment Team Leaders (Household Managers) hold oversight of the Risk Assessments and Positive Handling Plans for each child and directly monitor the recording of incidents. The Education Management Team monitors the recording of incidents that occur in Education (starting January 2023).

The Head and Deputy Heads of Group Living, and the Head Teacher, monitor recording systems and maintain the systems used to ensure practice and recording is of the highest standard.

ROLE OF THE TRUSTEE BODY

The Trustees remain focussed on the effectiveness of the school in working safely with and reducing children's challenging behaviours. They will receive regular updates providing analysis of patterns, effective patterns, and next steps. They have received training in Team Teach and review this policy annually. Trustees should not become involved in physical restraint.

ROLE OF PUPILS

It is intended that, through participation in groups and meetings, as well as through the reflective process, children should come to understand their own challenging behaviours and develop their capacity for verbalising feelings and self-regulating. This should lead to reduction in acting out behaviour. All children are introduced to the behaviour management processes of the school as part of their assessment period, and all children receive regular reminders of appropriate behaviour and the support adults can provide in helping children to regulate.

ROLE OF THE SCHOOL COUNCIL

The school council plays an important role in role modelling the behaviour expected of well-functioning community members. This does not mean they always behave well, but when things don't go so well the school council members should hold one another and other children to account and should role-model doing their best to work with the community to make things better. They should discuss concerns about behaviour within their meetings and take their thoughts and ideas for change to the sharing assembly or to other child and adult groups in the school.

ROLE OF PARENTS / CARERS

We know children make most progress when we are working well with the parents and carers. This means good clear communication and the parents and carers understanding the ways in which we are working with behaviour. It also requires common expectations to have been agreed and understood

Annex A

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This Behaviour Support Policy is underpinned by, and must be read in conjunction with, the statutory legislation, statutory guidance and inspection frameworks that apply to **both residential children's care and education settings in England**. The School operates within a **dual regulatory framework**, and this policy reflects the requirements of both systems.

All behaviour support practice, including the use of sanctions, withdrawal from group, separation, and restrictive interventions, must be **lawful, necessary, proportionate and in the best interests of the child**, with safeguarding and the promotion of positive relationships at the centre of practice.

1. Residential Children's Home Framework

For the purposes of residential care, this policy is informed by and complies with:

- **The Children Act 1989** and **The Children Act 2004**, which establish the paramount importance of the child's welfare and the duty to safeguard and promote children's wellbeing.
- **The Care Standards Act 2000**, which provides the legislative basis for the regulation and inspection of children's homes.
- **The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015**, with particular reference to:
 - Regulation 11 – The Positive Relationships Standard
 - Regulation 19 – Behaviour management and discipline
 - Regulation 20 – Restraint and deprivation of liberty
 - Regulation 35 – Behaviour management policies and records
- **Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the Quality Standards** (Department for Education), which provides statutory guidance on promoting positive behaviour, the lawful use of sanctions, the reduction of restrictive practices, and acceptable approaches to restraint.
- **Working Together to Safeguard Children** (HM Government), which sets out multi-agency safeguarding duties applicable to behaviour-related incidents and risks.

Residential behaviour support practice is also aligned with the expectations of the **Ofsted Social Care Common Inspection Framework (SCCIF)** for children's homes, which places emphasis on:

- minimising restrictive practices,
- learning from incidents,
- clear recording and oversight,

- and the quality of relationships between children and adults.

2. Education Framework (Non-Maintained Special School)

For the purposes of education, this policy is informed by and complies with:

- **The Education Act 2002** and **The Education and Inspections Act 2006**, which establish school powers and duties relating to behaviour, discipline and the use of reasonable force.
- **The Equality Act 2010**, including duties to make reasonable adjustments and to avoid discrimination, with specific relevance to pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND).
- **The Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014**, particularly Part 3 (Welfare, Health and Safety of Pupils), which requires schools to have clear, consistently applied behaviour policies and safeguarding arrangements.
- **Behaviour in Schools: Advice for Headteachers and School Staff** (Department for Education), which applies explicitly to non-maintained special schools and independent schools and provides guidance on:
 - behaviour policy design,
 - sanctions and rewards,
 - de-escalation,
 - SEND considerations,
 - and recording behaviour incidents.
- **Use of Restrictive Interventions, including Reasonable Force, in Schools** (Department for Education, April 2026), which provides statutory guidance on recording and reporting use of force, and non-statutory guidance on seclusion, withdrawal and prevention of restrictive practices.
- **Keeping Children Safe in Education** (Department for Education), which underpins the safeguarding responsibilities associated with behaviour management.

Behaviour support practice in Education is subject to inspection under the **Ofsted Education Inspection Framework (EIF)** and the applicable independent school inspection handbooks.

3. Integrated and Dual-Registration Context

Where children live and learn within the School's integrated residential and educational provision, this policy ensures:

- clear alignment between **children's home regulations and education guidance**;
- consistent thresholds for intervention across education and group living;

- clarity about **recording, notification and oversight responsibilities** under each framework;
- a shared commitment to **minimising restrictive interventions**, prioritising prevention, de-escalation and relational approaches.

Any separation from peers, withdrawal from group or use of restrictive intervention is understood as a **supportive, time-limited and therapeutic measure**, never a punishment, and is subject to monitoring, reflection and learning across both regulatory systems.