



Behaviour Policy

Independent school standard | KCSIE 2026 aligned

Promoting positive behaviour, and the sanctions, exclusions and recording arrangements that support it

Organisation	SENtre
Policy owner	Head Teacher
Approved by	SENtre Proprietor Board
Safeguarding oversight	Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL)
Effective date	September 2026
Next review	September 2027, or earlier if guidance or legislation changes
Connected policies	Anti-Bullying Policy, Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy, Staff Code of Conduct (including Low-Level Concerns), Whistleblowing Policy, Complaints Policy, SEND Policy, Equality & Diversity Policy

Policy status: This policy replaces SENtre's previous EYFS-framed behaviour policy. It is written for SENtre's school-level arrangements from September 2026, to meet paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and reflects Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026.

Introduction and Statement of Intent

SENtre believes that behaviour is a form of communication. Where a pupil's behaviour presents a barrier to their own learning or that of others, our first response is to understand the need or emotion behind it, not simply to sanction the behaviour itself. This policy sets out how SENtre promotes positive behaviour, the sanctions available where behaviour falls short of our expectations, and how decisions — including the most serious, such as suspension — are made fairly, proportionately and safely.

Every pupil has the right to learn in a safe, respectful environment, and every member of staff has the right to work in one. This policy applies to all pupils, and to behaviour on SENtre premises, on educational visits, and online where it affects the school community.

Legal and Statutory Framework

This policy is written to meet the standards on the promotion of good behaviour and the prevention of bullying set out in paragraphs 9 and 10 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, and reflects:

- Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE) 2026, including the expectation that schools are mobile phone-free by default, and the requirement for a behaviour policy to sit alongside the staff code of conduct covering low-level concerns, allegations and whistleblowing;
- the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments and not to discriminate against pupils because of behaviour arising from a disability;
- the Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years;
- DfE guidance, Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff (February 2024);
- DfE guidance, Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools;
- DfE guidance, Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools; and
- section 548 of the Education Act 1996, which prohibits corporal punishment in schools.

As an independent school, SENtre is not bound by the statutory suspension and permanent exclusion guidance that applies to maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units. SENtre instead operates the arrangements set out later in this policy, which meet the independent school standards' requirement to set out sanctions and keep a record of those imposed for serious misbehaviour.

In line with paragraph 32(3)(a) of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014, particulars of SENtre's policy on and arrangements for admissions, misbehaviour and exclusions are published on SENtre's website and in its prospectus.

Roles and Responsibilities

- The Proprietor Board approves this policy and monitors, at least annually, how fairly and consistently it is applied, paying particular attention to the protected characteristics under the Equality Act 2010.
- The Head Teacher implements this policy, sets the standard of behaviour expected across SENtre, and has the authority to suspend a pupil where necessary.
- The Behaviour Lead oversees day-to-day implementation, monitors patterns in recorded behaviour, and supports staff and pupils directly.
- The Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) is informed of any behaviour incident that may indicate a safeguarding concern.
- All staff apply this policy consistently, model the behaviour expected of pupils, and record incidents promptly and accurately.

Promoting Positive Behaviour

SENtre creates a safe, calm and nurturing environment through clear expectations, consistent routines, and warm, respectful relationships. Staff use de-escalation strategies, low-arousal approaches and emotional coaching to help pupils regulate their behaviour, and make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND, recognising that behaviour may be linked to unmet needs. Positive behaviour is encouraged through praise, role-modelling, and a whole-SENtre reward system that recognises effort, kindness and progress, not only academic attainment. Details of the current reward system are set out in staff guidance and communicated to pupils and parents at the start of each year.

Sanctions

Where a pupil's behaviour falls short of SENtre's expectations, staff use a graduated and proportionate range of responses, which may include: a verbal reminder; a restorative conversation; loss of a privilege or part of a break/free-choice activity; a call or message home; a fixed period of increased support or supervision; or, in the most serious cases, a temporary suspension (see below).

The following are never used as a sanction at SENtre:

- corporal punishment, or any physical contact intended to cause pain, injury or humiliation;
- seclusion or isolation out of sight and hearing of staff;
- withholding food or drink, other than a reasonable, agreed and understood restriction on choice;
- humiliation in front of peers or staff, or the use of threats or a pupil's known fears; and
- removing rewards that have already been fairly earned.

A written record is kept of all sanctions imposed for serious misbehaviour, including the date, the pupil, the behaviour, the sanction applied, and the member of staff involved, in line with paragraph 9(c) of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

Mobile Phones

In line with KCSIE 2026 and DfE guidance on mobile phones in schools, SENtre operates as a mobile phone-free environment by default. Pupils do not have access to personal mobile devices during the school day, including lessons, breaks and lunchtimes, other than by specific exception agreed with the Head Teacher (for example, for a medical or SEND-related need set out in a pupil's individual plan). Where a phone is confiscated, this is done in line with DfE guidance on searching, screening and confiscation.

Calm and Regulation Spaces

Calm or regulation spaces are used to support emotional regulation and wellbeing. They are not used as a punishment. Pupils are always supervised, spaces are never locked, and use is time-limited. Where use of a regulation space constitutes a restrictive intervention, it is recorded and reviewed in line with the section below.

Restrictive Physical Intervention and Reasonable Force

Restrictive physical intervention, including reasonable force, is used only as a last resort to prevent a pupil from harming themselves, harming others, causing serious damage to property, or causing serious disorder. It is proportionate, reasonable, and applied for the shortest time necessary, in line with DfE guidance. Restrictive interventions, including use of reasonable force, in schools.

Where a pupil has SEND, a mental health need, or a medical condition, staff consider the additional vulnerability this may create and SENtre's duties under the Equality Act 2010, including reasonable adjustments. Wherever possible, individual behaviour support plans are agreed with parents in advance to reduce the likelihood that restrictive intervention will be needed.

Any use of physical intervention is logged in SENtre's restraint book, kept in the white cupboard in the front hallway, on the same day, recording the date, time and duration of the intervention; the staff

involved; the child involved; what happened and the strategies attempted; and the circumstances and lead-up to the incident. The record must also capture the child's own perspective on what happened, using visual, symbol-based, or other communication-appropriate prompts for pupils who are non-verbal or pre-verbal, so that their account is included alongside staff's. Parents or carers are informed on the same day or as soon as reasonably practicable.

When Reasonable Force Must Not Be Used

Reasonable force must never be used as a punishment, to force compliance with an instruction, in response to low-level disruption, in response to verbal abuse alone, or because a pupil is refusing to work. Restrictive intervention is never used for staff convenience, and is never a substitute for de-escalation, positive behaviour support, or an up-to-date behaviour support plan.

Staff Training and Authorisation for Physical Intervention

Only staff who have completed SENtre's approved training may use physical intervention, except in a genuine emergency where there is an immediate risk of harm and no trained member of staff is available. Training covers autism and SEND awareness, trauma-informed practice, de-escalation strategies, and approved positive handling techniques, and is refreshed in line with the training provider's recommended timescale. SENtre maintains a record of which staff are trained and when their training is next due.

Safeguards During Physical Intervention

Where physical intervention is unavoidable, staff use the least restrictive option available and stop as soon as the risk has reduced. Pupils' dignity is maintained throughout, and staff monitor breathing, distress, and any medical needs for the duration of the intervention. A pupil must never be placed in, or held in, a prone (face-down) position.

Post-Incident Support

Following any use of restrictive intervention, the pupil is given calm, supportive care and time to re-regulate before any discussion of what happened. Reflection is developmentally and communication-appropriate, and may use visuals or another method suited to the pupil's needs rather than relying on verbal discussion alone. Staff involved are offered a debrief and support, and the pupil's risk assessment and behaviour support plan are reviewed to reduce the likelihood of a repeat incident.

Use of Door Bolts and Safe Spaces

Some rooms at SENtre are fitted with bolts. These are a safeguarding measure to prevent a pupil eloping from a space and placing themselves at risk, and must not be used for any other purpose. Bolts must never be used to lock a pupil into a room, to confine a pupil as a sanction, or to prevent a pupil leaving a space where there is no elopement risk, and rooms must not be permanently locked, except during a whole-SENtre lockdown procedure. Where a bolt is used to manage elopement risk, this is recorded in the same way as any other restrictive intervention, including the circumstances, duration, and staff involved, and is reflected in the pupil's individual risk assessment and behaviour support plan.

Identifying Staff Providing 1:1 Support

Where a member of staff is providing 1:1 support to a pupil for safeguarding reasons, they wear a red or orange bib. This allows other staff to identify at a glance that the pupil is receiving dedicated 1:1 supervision, so that support can be adjusted or additional help sought quickly if needed. This is a visual safeguarding aid only, and does not replace staff's responsibility to record and escalate concerns in the usual way.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Where a member of staff needs to search a pupil or confiscate an item, including a mobile phone or another prohibited item, this is carried out in line with DfE guidance, Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools, and recorded appropriately.

Anti-Bullying

Bullying, harassment and discriminatory behaviour are never acceptable at SENtre. Any incident is investigated promptly, recorded, and responded to in line with SENtre's Anti-Bullying Policy, which sets out our full strategy for preventing bullying so far as reasonably practicable, in line with paragraph 10 of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014. Parents are informed where their child is involved in a bullying incident, whether as the person affected or the person responsible.

A Restorative Approach

Where behaviour has affected another pupil or member of staff, SENtre uses a restorative approach wherever appropriate: giving the pupil time to reflect with a trusted adult, understanding what led to the incident, and agreeing how any harm caused can be put right. The aim is always to repair relationships and support the pupil's successful return to learning, alongside — not instead of — any sanction that applies.

Temporary Suspension

SENtre works to avoid suspending any pupil, as it removes them from valuable teaching and learning time. However, in exceptional circumstances — for example, serious physical violence towards another pupil or member of staff, serious damage to property, or a serious incident of bullying — the Head Teacher may decide that a temporary suspension is necessary and proportionate.

- Only the Head Teacher (or acting Head Teacher) has the authority to suspend a pupil.
- Parents or carers are informed in writing of the reason for the suspension, its length, and the arrangements for the pupil's return.
- A written record is kept of every suspension, in line with paragraph 9(c) of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.
- Before any decision to suspend, SENtre considers whether the pupil's behaviour is linked to an unmet SEND or safeguarding need, and whether reasonable adjustments could avoid the need for suspension.
- Where a pupil's needs appear to have outgrown what SENtre can safely meet, an emergency review of the pupil's EHCP (where they have one) will be organised with parents and relevant professionals.

Safeguarding Separation

In exceptional circumstances — for example, a serious safeguarding allegation, an allegation of harm towards another pupil, or where professional advice indicates it is necessary — SENtre may implement a period of safeguarding separation while a concern is investigated. This is not a suspension and is not a sanction. It will only be used where there is a clear safeguarding rationale, will be reviewed regularly, will involve parents/carers and relevant professionals as appropriate, and will be managed in line with SENtre's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and current statutory guidance. SENtre will keep disruption to the pupil's education to a minimum.

High-Risk Behaviour and Individual Planning

Where a pupil's behaviour presents a significant or recurring risk, an individual risk assessment is completed and the pupil's behaviour support plan is reviewed. Decisions are made on an individual basis, considering reasonable adjustments, staffing arrangements and additional support. SENtre does not use blanket thresholds or automatic attendance bans.

Serious Violence and Weapons

Serious violence is a safeguarding concern, not only a behaviour matter. Any member of staff who has a concern that a pupil is carrying, using, or threatening with a weapon, or expresses an intent to do so, must report this to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) immediately, in line with SENTre's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy and Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026. The DSL will assess the risk to the individual pupil and others, and put in place a safety and support plan where needed. Staff are also mindful that pupils with disrupted education, including those who have been suspended, may be at higher risk of involvement in serious violence, and will consider this when planning support around any suspension.

Reintegration and Multi-Agency Working

Following any suspension or period of safeguarding separation, a reintegration plan is agreed with parents or carers. Where appropriate, external professionals are involved to support the pupil. Progress is reviewed regularly and plans are adjusted as needed.

SEND and Equality Considerations

SENTre makes reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND in line with the Equality Act 2010 and the SEND Code of Practice, recognising that behaviour may be a form of unmet need rather than a choice to misbehave. Where a pupil has an EHCP, its provisions are secured, and SENTre works with the local authority and other bodies as required. Staff use professional judgement to distinguish between behaviour that is wilful and behaviour that reflects a pupil's identified needs, and sanctions are applied fairly and proportionately with this distinction in mind.

Recording and Monitoring

All sanctions, suspensions, restrictive interventions and bullying incidents are recorded in SENTre's behaviour log. The Behaviour Lead reviews records regularly to identify patterns, and reports concerning trends to the Head Teacher. Any behavioural concern that may indicate a safeguarding need is passed to the DSL without delay, in line with SENTre's Safeguarding & Child Protection Policy.

The Head Teacher reports to the Proprietor Board at least annually on the operation of this policy, including the number and pattern of suspensions and serious sanctions, with particular regard to whether any protected characteristic is disproportionately represented.

Working with Parents and Carers

SENTre believes that a consistent approach between home and school gives pupils the best chance of managing their own behaviour with increasing independence. Staff communicate regularly with parents and carers about behaviour, both to celebrate success and to work together where support is needed.

Staff Conduct

This policy is read alongside SENTre's Staff Code of Conduct, which covers low-level concerns, allegations against staff, and whistleblowing, and SENTre's Whistleblowing Policy, which sets out how staff can raise concerns about how behaviour incidents — or anything else — are being handled.

Monitoring and Review

This policy is reviewed annually by the Head Teacher and Proprietor Board, or sooner if there are changes to legislation, statutory guidance (including future editions of Keeping Children Safe in Education), or the needs of pupils attending SENTre.

Adopted by: SENTre Proprietor Board

Date: September 2026

Review date: September 2027