Unified Academy

BEHAVIOUR POLICY

2026/2027

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Date of next review	June 2027

This policy sets out how behaviour is understood and managed at Unified Academy. All Unified Academy staff, students, apprentices, families and stakeholders should have ownership of and a commitment to the policy.

This policy is written with reference to legislation and government guidance including:

- Behaviour in schools: advice for headteachers and school staff
- Searching, screening and confiscation: advice for schools
- The Equality Act 2010
- Keeping Children Safe in Education
- Suspension and permanent exclusion from maintained schools, academies and pupil referral units in England, including pupil movement - 2022
- Use of reasonable force in schools
- Supporting pupils with medical conditions at school
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice.
- Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014
- Section 89 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006

This policy should be read in conjunction with our Anti-Bullying Policy, which is available from the Policies page of our website: https://www.unifiedacademy.org/key-information/policies/
This policy complies with our funding agreement and articles of association

Our Vision

Unified Academy upholds the principle of ***'Supporting each other, achieving together'***. We aim to ensure that our school provides the stability, consistency and care to enable our students to develop and thrive in a stimulating and structured environment where everyone feels safe, included, respected and able to achieve their full potential. We understand that behaviour is a form of communication and that physical, emotional, learning or social difficulties often manifest as behaviours of concern.

Many of our students have encountered trauma and have complex needs which present their own unique challenges. However, we know that by creating an environment where they feel physically and emotionally safe, establishing clear and consistent expectations, boundaries and routines and building positive relationships based on trust and inclusivity, students can engage, learn and develop the resilience required to tackle adversity and thrive.
Our staff recognise the difficulties our students are facing and are mindful that trauma can impact physically and neurologically and that students' response to perceived threat may be challenging. We aim to understand interactions from a holistic perspective, respond with empathy and focus on building strong collaborative, strengths-based relationships to promote self-regulation, growth and learning.

When a student requires more support to regulate their emotions we focus on the feelings and bodily sensations that a student may have during various stages of escalation. These reactions may become the student's default so they may be hypersensitive, anxious and constantly scanning for threat and maybe misattributing a threat that is not actually there. To support this we use empathy, active listening, validating emotions, restorative and collaborative problem solving and try to help students identify how they are feeling in their minds and their body. When students can identify this, we are then able to support and build the neuropathways that will help students to use tried and tested strategies that enable students to become more independent when trying to regulate themselves.

Unified Academy Values

Aims

This policy aims to:

- Establish our ethos and framework for promoting and nurturing positive behaviour among all members of the school community
- Provide a consistent approach to understanding and managing behaviour at Unified Academy
- Define what we consider to be positive behaviour, including behaviour for learning
- Define what we consider to be unacceptable behaviour, including bullying and discrimination
- Outline our expectations for student behaviour
- Summarise the roles and responsibilities of different people in the school community with regards to behaviour management
- Outline our system of rewards and sanctions

The principles of high quality learning behaviour are paramount. This is behaviour that most ably supports young people to engage most purposefully with their learning. This will include social communication skills, such as turn taking, active listening, responsiveness to adults and peers and high levels of engagement. In many cases, such behaviours will need to be actively taught, promoted and modelled by key adults within the overall framework of good and outstanding teaching.

At Unified Academy, we will:

- Understand that positive behaviour promotes high quality learning experiences.
- Maintain a culture and ethos that has respect for the child or young person at its centre.
- Provide an environment of calm and good order.
- Have positive expectations that pupils/students will behave well, with courtesy and with self-discipline, and that staff uphold strong professional and personal values towards each other.
- Embed effective systems and procedures to encourage and maintain positive behaviour, with a set of strategies to help staff prevent and respond to behaviours of concern.
- Recognise behaviour as communication and always treat it as such.
- Provide relevant training, structures and support for all, including families.
- Work in close partnership with families and other stakeholders to ensure that pupils/students are well supported.

Our Approach to Positively Managing Behaviour

At Unified Academy we believe in providing clear expectations and boundaries for all our students. This helps foster positive relationships which instil trust and respect, and helps to maintain a safe, calm and organised environment within which students can engage, optimise learning outcomes and personal development.

Our staff team strive to role model safe supportive relationships, promote resilience and emotional wellbeing, cultivate partnerships and help students gain a good understanding of what is expected of them at school. We also provide consistent boundaries and expectations to provide a sense of safety and structure. This approach is represented visually throughout the school in displays, whole school assemblies and embedded within the curriculum which is adapted to provide pathways for self-reflection and self-expression.

At Unified Academy we promote and facilitate positive behaviour by:

- Establishing a learning community in which the general environment is calm, well ordered and disciplined.
- Setting a good example by behaving in the way it is desirable for students to behave; promoting high quality attitudes to learning.
- Being proactive by highlighting and praising positive behaviour.
- Ensuring that student voice is regularly heard and valued as part of school culture, so that students feel valued as part of the school community.
- Working to minimise behaviours that challenge e.g. avoiding confrontation, avoiding 'triggers' or background factors known to present difficulties to the student.
- Ensuring that everyone is clear about which behaviours are appropriate, and which are

inappropriate, i.e. ensuring a clear distinction between behaviour which is to be reinforced and that which is to be discouraged or ignored.

- Introducing planned activities that are matched to students' strengths and weaknesses, with high expectations and a belief in their learning potential in order to develop the very best attitudes to learning.
- Focusing upon teaching positive communication in the most suitable format for each student (this may help students influence others without dysregulation).
- Helping the child or young person to anticipate the sequence of daily events and activities to maximise understanding and minimise anxiety.
- Providing consistent positive feedback.
- Ensuring that adults respond to student behaviour in a consistent and fair manner.
- Ensuring that individual Risk Assessments, Support Plans and other written support strategies for students are kept up to date and that all relevant staff are familiar with them.
- Encouraging adult tolerance and understanding of children's or young people's specific difficulties.
- Paying attention to antecedents and consequences associated with behaviour.
- Providing structured, predictable environments and routines for pupils/students who benefit from them.
- Monitoring student stress levels and offering 'escape' mechanisms.
- Teaching students' appropriate self-management strategies and supporting them to develop the skills of empathy, tolerance, respect for individual differences and conflict resolution.
- Incorporating an expectation of positive behaviour across the curriculum.

Rewards and Positive Action Plans

At Unified Academy we reward and celebrate individual wins and successes no matter how small. Our overriding objective is to positively reinforce positive behaviours, encourage effort and reward progress. We believe it is fundamental that students are equipped with the necessary life skills to manage their own behaviour effectively.

In all instances the first response to poor conduct or undesired behaviours is to follow the school's positive action plan. If students display undesired behaviour, we want them to understand that by doing so, they limit their opportunity to gain certain rewards rather than lose earned rewards or receive punishment/sanctions.

The epraise system reflects the school's values: curiosity, respect, compassion, inspired and empowered, and is designed to celebrate and reflect student progress. Students are awarded epraise points which accumulate over the academic year. Once earned, points cannot be deducted because of behaviour. Points reward appropriate and positive behaviours and recognise effort in all aspects of the school day. Parent/carers and students can monitor and interpret these points at any point through the use of the parent app.

Students can be awarded with a maximum of 15 points per lesson.
5 points can be awarded in each of these categories:

- **Curious** - going to and staying in lessons (agreed movement breaks are still allowed)
- **Respectful** – showing respect for your staff, classmates and everyone's learning
- **Inspired** – taking part in the learning and completing the work set in each lesson

Daily Points- 75

Epraise points must reflect individual learner progress, therapeutic interventions all follow the lesson point system of 15 Points Per Session.
Additional 'bonus' points can be given in line with the school values (no more than 10), for high levels of attendance, completing specific reading based tasks and in recognition of achieving a 'Principals Postcard' or 'Golden Ticket'.

Additional reward trips will take place every 3 weeks (twice per half term) for the top 10 points scorers in the school.

Interventions, Support and Re-engagement

Our focus is on building student trust, resilience and independence by ensuring boundaries and expectations are clear whilst providing supportive and therapeutic interventions. To maintain a safe, nurturing and effective learning environment, we aim to de-escalate situations through early intervention and positive relationships wherever possible. We recognise, however, that there are times when students require additional support to regulate and re-engage with learning.

Responses to incidents will always be individualised, proportionate and informed by students' strengths, needs, communication profiles and support plans.

Graduated Support and Re-engagement Framework

At Unified Academy, we recognise that behaviour is a form of communication and that students may, at times, require additional support to successfully engage with learning, relationships and the wider school community.

To provide consistency, predictability and emotional safety for all students, the Academy operates a Graduated Support and Re-engagement Framework. This framework applies throughout the school day, including lessons, social times, transitions, enrichment activities, therapeutic interventions, educational visits and all communal areas of the school.

The purpose of this framework is to provide opportunities for students to regulate, reflect, repair and successfully re-engage with learning whilst maintaining a calm, safe and purposeful environment for all.

Stage 1 Support

Stage 1 Support is used when behaviour begins to impact learning, relationships, wellbeing or the safe and orderly running of the school.

Examples may include:

- Inappropriate language.
- Calling out or interrupting others.
- Low-level disruption.
- Refusal or avoidance of learning activities.
- Failure to follow a reasonable instruction.
- Misuse of equipment or resources.
- Unsafe behaviour.
- Behaviour that negatively affects the learning of others.

Staff will respond using supportive and preventative strategies which may include:

- A reminder of expectations.
- Processing time.
- Positive redirection.
- Emotional regulation support.
- Visual or verbal prompts.
- Access to agreed strategies or reasonable adjustments.
- Co-regulation with a trusted adult.

The aim of Stage 1 Support is to help students quickly return to successful engagement with learning and school routines.

Stage 2 Support

Stage 2 Support is implemented when a student continues to experience difficulties despite Stage 1 intervention or when additional adult support is required.

Examples may include:

- Persistent disruption.
- Persistent refusal or avoidance.
- Escalating verbal conflict.
- Repeated inappropriate language.
- Continued unsafe behaviour.
- Behaviour that significantly impacts learning, wellbeing or relationships.

Staff may provide:

- Additional support from pastoral staff.
- Structured regulation opportunities.
- Restorative conversations.
- Adapted learning tasks.

- Sensory or movement breaks.
- Increased levels of adult guidance.
- Access to therapeutic strategies identified within support plans.

The focus remains on helping the student regulate, reflect and re-engage successfully.

Stage 3 Targeted Intervention

A Stage 3 Targeted Intervention may be required when:

- Behaviour continues despite earlier support.
- A student is unable to engage safely in learning.
- Behaviour presents a risk to their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of others or the learning environment.
- Significant disruption prevents effective teaching and learning.
- A student deliberately removes themselves from learning without permission.
- A student refuses repeated reasonable requests from staff to engage with learning or follow agreed expectations.

Students will be supported by the Pastoral Team within an appropriate pastoral space.

The purpose of this intervention is to:

- Support emotional regulation.
- Restore a sense of safety.
- Explore the factors contributing to the behaviour.
- Identify strategies to support future success.
- Facilitate restorative reflection through the principles of Regulate, Relate, Reason and Repair.
- Support successful re-engagement with learning.

Where appropriate, students will complete curriculum work during the intervention.

All Stage 3 interventions will be recorded and monitored through CPOMS.

Where a student misses learning as a result of being absent from a lesson without authorisation, refusing to engage with learning or absconding from a lesson, the missed curriculum time will be recorded and considered as part of any Curriculum Recovery Session.

Students who miss two or more lessons within the same school day through absconding, refusal to attend or persistent non-engagement will be required to attend an After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session in order to recover lost learning and support successful re-engagement.

Curriculum Recovery Sessions

Where learning has been missed as a result of non-engagement, refusal to participate in learning, or attendance at a Stage 3 Targeted Intervention, students may be required to attend a Curriculum Recovery Session.

Curriculum Recovery Sessions provide additional supported time to:

- Complete missed learning.
- Receive individual guidance and support.
- Develop strategies for future engagement.
- Restore learning opportunities.
- Strengthen organisation and study skills.

These sessions may take place during part of a lunchtime period and will normally last up to 30 minutes.

The purpose of Curriculum Recovery Sessions is educational and supportive. They are intended to ensure students can access the curriculum successfully and continue to make academic progress.

Students who choose not to attend or engage with a Curriculum Recovery Session may be required to attend an After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session.

After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Sessions

Where additional support, reflection or curriculum recovery is required, students may be expected to attend an After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session.

Students who receive two Stage 3 Targeted Interventions, or who miss two or more lessons through absconding, refusal to attend or persistent non-engagement within the same school day, will automatically be required to attend an After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session.

An After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session may also be implemented when:

- A student does not attend or engage with a Curriculum Recovery Session.
- A student repeatedly refuses to engage with learning.
- Significant curriculum time has been lost due to non-engagement.
- Additional restorative work, reflection or curriculum recovery is required.
- A student removes, hides, takes or refuses to return staff property or personal belongings.
- A student deliberately takes another person's belongings.
- A student refuses to participate in restorative actions following an incident.

The session will provide opportunities for:

- Restorative reflection.
- Repairing relationships.
- Curriculum recovery.
- Development of self-regulation strategies.
- Identification of barriers to learning.
- Planning for future success.

The duration of an After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session will normally be up to 60 minutes.

Parents and carers will be informed prior to the session taking place.

These sessions are educational and restorative in nature and are intended to support positive behaviour, accountability and successful re-engagement with school life.

Repairing Harm and Restoring the Environment

Where behaviour has resulted in damage to property, equipment, resources or the learning environment, students will be supported to take appropriate responsibility through restorative actions.

This may include:

- Assisting with repairs where appropriate and safe to do so.
- Contributing to restoring the learning environment.
- Completing restorative conversations.
- Making amends through positive contributions to the school community.
- Participating in a supervised repair or restoration activity during a Curriculum Recovery Session or After-School Reflection and Curriculum Recovery Session.

Where damage cannot reasonably be repaired by the student, parents or carers may be contacted to discuss the matter and agree appropriate next steps.

The purpose of restorative actions is to develop responsibility, empathy and accountability whilst maintaining positive relationships and a sense of belonging within the school community.

Additional Support

Where repeated Stage 3 Targeted Interventions indicate that a student requires further support, the school may initiate a review of provision, including:

- Analysis of CPOMS data.
- Review of risk assessments and support plans.
- Targeted observations.
- Family meetings.
- Additional therapeutic interventions.
- Review of behaviour contracts and support plans.
- Curriculum or environmental adjustments.
- Multi-agency involvement where appropriate.

The purpose of this review is to identify underlying need, reduce barriers to success and ensure the student receives the right support at the right time.

Suspension and exclusions

Suspension is when a student is removed from the school for a fixed period. This was previously referred to as a 'fixed-term exclusion'. Permanent exclusion is when a student is removed from the school permanently and taken off the school roll. This is sometimes referred to as an 'exclusion'.

It is the expectation that suspensions are utilised as a last resort as the school has adopted a reflective and restorative approach. There will be exceptional circumstances but the aim is to educate students about their behaviour and enhance their empathy and self-reflection skills.

Please refer to our suspension and exclusion policy for more information.

https://www.unifiedacademy.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Suspension-and-Permanent-Exclusion-Policy-2.1.pdf

Forbidden sanctions
The following sanctions towards students are always prohibited, either on or off the school premises:

- Corporal (i.e. physical) punishment in any form, including rough handling.
- Excessive shouting.
- Deprivation of food or drink.
- Restriction or refusal of contact with friends or familiar adults, except where it is an agreed plan or for protection.
- Wearing of distinctive or inappropriate clothing as a punishment.
- Use or withholding medication or medical treatment.
- The locking of a student in a room at any time even when accompanied by an adult.

Physical Intervention

Unified Academy will continually assess, plan, and review individual student support plans to support children in crisis. Staff will where possible de-escalate situations and behavioural incidents keeping the child in mind in all decision- making processes. Our Staff recognise the importance students developing the necessary skills to manage and regulate their own behaviour and will act in accordance with statutory guidance pertaining the Physical Intervention as a last resort. Unified Academy is dedicated to minimising all forms of physical contact or the need for physical intervention by ensuring proactive, preventative, and measurable approaches are in place to help support students manage their behaviour positively.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/812435/reducing-the-need-for-restraint-and-restrictive- intervention.pdf

The Education and Inspections Acts (Section 93) provides legal right for staff to act in accordance with the detailed guidelines. Staff can use reasonable force for the purpose of preventing a student from doing (or continuing to do) any of the following,

a) committing any offence,
b) causing personal injury to, or damage to the property of, any person (including the student himself, or
c) prejudicing the maintenance of good order and discipline at the school or among any students receiving education at the school, whether during a teaching session or otherwise

https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/40/pdfs/ukpga_20060040_en.pdf

All incidences of Physical Intervention will be submitted to the schools reporting, recording system. Staff and Students will have allocated time with a member of Senior Leadership Team, Student Support and all parties involved in which professional judgment will be used to determine the type of incident and level of risk presented; degree of force used; positive action moving forward and use of restorative measures where appropriate and the impact on individuals involved.

Staff and students may require support, reassurance, or guidance if this is necessary Student Support and Senior Leadership will act immediately to facilitate interventions and timetable adaptions.

All physical interventions will be conveyed to Parents and Guardians through the Student Support Team Portals or a member of Senior Leadership Team.

Unified Academy Team Teach Approach

Team Teach describes a broad spectrum of risk reduction strategies. It is a holistic approach involving policy, guidance, management of the environment, staff deployment and restraint accounting for only a small part of the framework.

95% Positive behavioural Support

- Use of spaces
- Management of time
- Changes in environment
- Stance, postures, and gestures
- Facial expressions
- Eyes
- Voice words

5% physical contact

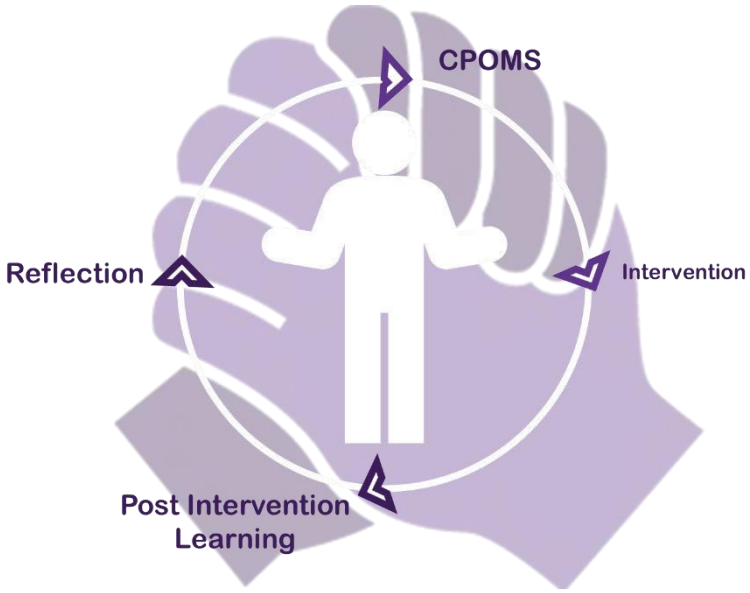
- Prompts, comfort, and reassuring touch
- Guide, escorts and hold
- Physical restraint and restrictive physical interventions

Reasonable, Proportionate, and Necessary

Reporting recording and repairing systems

CPOMS provides a robust system for reporting and monitoring progress, assessing frequency incidents and identifying patterns in data to enable preventative action.

Data is regularly extracted, analysed and reported to the Trust to provide assurance through the governance system. Pastoral team use this data to identify and effectively target students and design interventions to optimise positive behaviour change.



It is crucial that all those involved in incidences follow the correct procedure for reporting and recording. Our CPOMs behaviour reporting is arranged in 3 different levels.

Level 1 behaviours: Damage to property; inappropriate language, persistent disruptive behaviour, Early intervention is encouraged for refusal or non-compliance all of these behaviours to encourage students should begin making the correct choices or decisions. Incidence are uploaded and actioned contemporaneously.

Level 2 behaviours: as access to restricted area, persistent inappropriate language, persistent refusal non-compliance, physical aggression causing limited or no physical harm, possession of prohibited items, refusal to be searched, stealing, unsafe behaviour, verbal aggression towards adults or wilful damage to property. These incidents need to be uploaded as soon as possible and assigned to a member of the pastoral team and or a member of SLT.

Level 3 incidences: accessing restricted area, bringing dangerous items or illicit substances into school, extreme physical aggression that causes harm, health and safety breach, physical assault on staff and or risk to self and others. These are all assigned to the Assistant Head for Pastoral.
All incidences are analysed, and the appropriate response/ intervention is put in place to support students and try to minimise reoccurrence. SLT meet with staff who have been involved of any behaviour incident to ensure their wellbeing and undertake a risk assessment to mitigate risk.

Student support systems

At Unified Academy students understand expectations around behaviour and what the school will do to ensure that they feel and are safe. Positive behaviour is modelled by all staff, at all times; it is taught and promoted as part of the curriculum, including lessons, assemblies and tutor time. Student voice opportunities such as Student Council enable regular discussions around what positive and unacceptable behaviours are (e.g. bullying, sexual harassment). Students are consulted on the type of rewards they wish to see within the school, and have worked with staff to draw up a student-facing school values and rewards.

The school's Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer gives details of the universal, targeted and specialist provision that is available to support pupils/students' safety and wellbeing, including interventions to support positive behaviour and effective behaviour for learning. This may include therapeutic input, targeted curriculum delivery or involvement from external agencies as appropriate.

All students are made aware of safeguarding arrangements and who they can talk to if they have concerns. There are safeguarding posters throughout the building with details of the Safeguarding team; every student has a trusted adult they can talk to; the school has a Worries and Concerns Procedure that clearly sets out options for students to raise concerns and seek support. The school's Anti-Bullying Policy is clear and is regularly discussed with students and families.

Off-site behaviour

This policy also applies when students are:

- Taking part in any school-organised or school-related activity (e.g. school trips)
- Travelling to or from school
- Wearing school uniform
- In any other way identifiable as a student of our school

Unified Academy will also consider any behaviour incidents outside of school which:

- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school
- Pose a threat to another student, staff member or member of the public
- Could adversely affect the reputation of the school

In the event that actions are applied for any such behaviour, these will only be given out within school jurisdiction (e.g. on school premises or on a school-organised trip).

Online behaviour

Please refer to the Online Safety Policy and our Safeguarding and Wellbeing Offer for full details of how Unified Academy supports our students to stay safe and develop positive behaviour habits in their online lives.

There may be occasions when a student's online behaviour requires intervention by the school. These includes behaviours that:

- Pose a threat or causes harm to another student.
- Could have repercussions for the orderly running of the school.
- Adversely affect the reputation of the school.
- Identify the student as a member of the school.

In such circumstances, Unified Academy will work with the student, parents/carers and any other affected parties to address the behaviour. This may include actions and/or supportive measures as set out above.

Searching, Screening and Confiscation

Unified Academy Staff have the statutory power to search, confiscate, retain, or dispose of any items or student possession where there are reasonable grounds for suspecting that students may have prohibited items. Staff will use their legal power to seize any items they consider harmful or detrimental to the discipline of the school.

Prohibited items include:

- Knives or weapons
- Alcohol
- Illegal drugs
- Stolen items
- Tobacco, cigarette papers, vapes
- 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 student) found in students' possession will be confiscated. These items will not be returned to students.

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

Students who refuse to comply with school searching, screening and confiscation policy will be referred to a member of the Pastoral Support Team or a Senior Leadership Team for Student Support.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/searching-screening-and-confiscation

Safeguarding

At Unified Academy we understand behaviour as communication and remain alert to the possibility that changes in student behaviour, including behaviour that falls outside of positive expectations, may indicate a safeguarding concern or other unmet need relating to the student's SEND. Where a student displays behaviour that is unusual, concerning or potentially harmful, we will both address the behaviour (through appropriate intervention including actions as detailed above) and seek to explore the possible cause in order to effectively support the student and the school community. Please refer to our Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy for further details.

Bullying

Bullying is defined as the repetitive, intentional harming of one person or group by another person or group, where the relationship involves an imbalance of power.

Bullying is, therefore:

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

Bullying can include:

TYPE OF BULLYING	DEFINITION
Emotional	Being unfriendly, excluding, tormenting
Physical	Hitting, kicking, pushing, taking another's belongings, any use of violence
Prejudice-based and discriminatory, including: • Racial • Faith-based • Gendered (sexist) • Homophobic/biphobic • Transphobic • Disability-based	Taunts, gestures, graffiti or physical abuse focused on a particular characteristic (e.g. gender, race, sexuality)
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 our school's approach to preventing and addressing bullying are set out in our Anti-Bullying Policy

Racism and Discrimination

Any form of discrimination will not be tolerated at Unified Academy and will be addressed through the Race Equality Policy. Any incidences of racism are reported to the Principal who will address these incidents in line with this policy. Where applicable the Principal will inform the Governors and incidences of discrimination may be reported to the police.

Sexual harassment and sexual violence

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

Students are encouraged to report anything that makes them uncomfortable, no matter how 'small' they feel it might be. Please see our Worries and Concerns Procedure for further details.

The school's response to all allegations or incidents will be:

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

Please refer to our Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy for more information.

Managing allegations against students or staff

Please refer to our Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy for full details of how Unified Academy responds to student allegations of abuse against staff or other students.

Where a student makes an allegation against another student or member of staff and that allegation is shown to have been deliberately invented or malicious, the school will apply appropriate actions in line with this policy. We also recognise that deliberately invented allegations can indicate that the accuser is in need of help themselves and will work to support all those involved in the allegation in line with our Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy.

Staff development and support

To support students in achieving their full potential, whilst being rewarded for appropriate behaviour and challenged when behaviour falls below the community's expectation, staff will receive regular training in the following approaches:

- Approaches to Neurodiversity
- Self-regulation and Emotional Control with Zones of regulation
- Emotional Literacy /Emotion Coaching
- PACE
- SEMH Needs
- Trauma Informed Approach
- Restorative Approaches
- Safeguarding
- Team Teach de-escalation strategies and positive handling
- Supporting learning needs such dyslexia and dyscalculia
- Communication and Interaction Need
- Sensory and/or Physical Need

Additionally, staff at OHCAT Academies are able to access Trust-wide training and CPD, which contributes to the organisational culture of positive behaviour CPD focusing on e.g. mental health and wellbeing, specific types of SEND, positive behaviour and communication, as well as effective SEND-focused safeguarding training.

Responsibilities

The Local Governing Body will:

- Review and approve this policy not less than annually.
- Monitor the implementation and impact of this policy.

The Principal will:

- Promote a culture of mutual respect, trust between students and staff and the fostering of a positive learning environment.
- Review and update this policy and any attendant procedures on an annual basis.
- Implement this policy to ensure that behaviour is supported and managed consistently throughout the school.
- Ensure that all staff receive relevant, high quality CPD including Team Teach training at induction and via regular refreshers, in order to support and promote positive behaviour.
- Regularly analyse behaviour data in order to discern trends, risks etc. and report on these to the OHC&AT Executive Senior Leadership Team as part of regular key risks monitoring.

All staff will:

- Promote a culture of positive behaviour within the school.
- Ensure they are familiar with and adhere to all relevant behaviour programmes and risk assessments.
- Undertake required and relevant CPD to ensure that they are able to effectively support students' needs and communication preferences, including understanding and responding to behaviours that may challenge.
- Report and record any incidents promptly via the correct channels.

Students will:

- Be supported to understand and fully participate in the school behaviour culture, at induction and throughout their time with us.
- Have opportunities to feedback on our behaviour culture, including reward systems, via School Council, student surveys and tutor time.
- Be expected to model and uphold our core values to be Curious, Respectful, Compassionate, Inspired and Empowered.

Parents/carers will:

- Work with the school to support their child's engagement in effective behaviour for learning.
- Inform the school of any changes in circumstances that may affect their child's behaviour.
- Discuss any concerns with the class teacher promptly.

Monitoring and implementation

This policy will be updated by the Principal, and reviewed and approved by the Local Governing Body, not less than annually.

Related policies and procedures

Anti-Bullying Policy
Attendance Policy
Child Protection Adult Protection & Safeguarding Policy
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
Online Safety Policy
Exclusions Policy
Families and Visitors Code of Conduct
Health & Safety Policy
Safeguarding & Wellbeing Offer
Relationships and Sex Education Policy
Risk Assessment Policy
Staff Code of Conduct
Staff Mental Wealth, Health and Wellbeing Policy
Student Mental Wealth, Health and Wellbeing Policy
Substance Misuse Policy

APPENDIX A

Use of Reasonable Force - Advice for Principals, Staff and Governing Bodies

About this guidance

This is non-statutory advice from the Department for Education. It is intended to provide clarification on the use of force to help school staff feel more confident about using this power when they feel it is necessary and to make clear the responsibilities of head teachers and governing bodies in respect of this power.

What legislation does this guidance relate to?

Education and Inspections Act 2006.

Who is this advice for?

This advice is aimed at governing bodies, Principals and school staff in **all schools**

Key points

- School staff have a legal power to use force and lawful use of the power will provide a defence to any related criminal prosecution or other legal action.
- Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force.
- Senior school leaders should support their staff when they use this power.

"All schools" include Academies, Free Schools, independent schools and all types of maintained schools.

What is reasonable force?

i. The term 'reasonable force' covers the broad range of actions used by most teachers at some point in their career that involve a degree of physical contact with pupils.
ii. Force is usually used either to control or restrain. This can range from guiding a pupil to safety by the arm through to more extreme circumstances such as breaking up a fight or where a student needs to be restrained to prevent violence or injury.
iii. 'Reasonable in the circumstances' means using no more force than is needed.
iv. As mentioned above, schools generally use force to control pupils and to restrain them. Control means either passive physical contact, such as standing between pupils or blocking a pupil's path, or active physical contact such as leading a pupil by the arm out of a classroom.
v. Restraint means to hold back physically or to bring a pupil under control. It is typically used in more extreme circumstances, for example when two pupils are fighting and refuse to separate without physical intervention.
vi. School staff should always try to avoid acting in a way that might cause injury, but in extreme cases it may not always be possible to avoid injuring the pupil.

Who can use reasonable force?

i. All members of school staff have a legal power to use reasonable force (Section 93, Education and Inspections Act 2006).
ii. This power applies to any member of staff at the school. It can also apply to people whom the Principal has temporarily put in charge of pupils such as unpaid volunteers or parents accompanying students on a school organised visit.

When can reasonable force be used?

i. Reasonable force can be used to prevent pupils from hurting themselves or others, from damaging property, or from causing disorder.
ii. In a school, force is used for two main purposes – to control pupils or to restrain them.
iii. The decision on whether or not to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the staff member concerned and should always depend on the individual circumstances.

The following list is not exhaustive but provides some examples of situations where reasonable force can and cannot be used.

Schools can use reasonable force to:

- Remove disruptive children from the classroom where they have refused to follow an instruction to do so;
- Prevent a pupil behaving in a way that disrupts a school event or a school trip or visit;
- Prevent a pupil leaving the classroom where allowing the pupil to leave would risk their safety or lead to behaviour that disrupts the behaviour of others;
- Prevent a pupil from attacking a member of staff or another pupil, or to stop a fight in the playground; and
- Restrain a pupil at risk of harming themselves through physical outbursts.

Schools cannot:

- Use force as a punishment – **it is always unlawful to use force as a punishment.**

Communicating the school's approach to the use of force

i. Every school is required by law to have a behaviour policy and to make this policy known to staff, parents and pupils. The governing body should notify the Principal that it expects the school behaviour policy to include the power to use reasonable force.
ii. There is no legal requirement to have a policy on the use of force but it is good practice to set out, in the behaviour policy, the circumstances in which force might be used. For example, it could say that teachers will physically separate pupils found fighting or that if a pupil refuses to leave a room when instructed to do so, they will be physically removed.
iii. Any policy on the use of reasonable force should acknowledge their legal duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled children and children with SEN.
iv. Schools do not require parental consent to use force on a student.
v. Schools should **not** have a 'no contact' policy. There is a real risk that such a policy might place a member of staff in breach of their duty of care towards a pupil, or prevent them taking action needed to prevent a pupil causing harm.
vi. By taking steps to ensure that staff, pupils and parents are clear about when force might be used, the school will reduce the likelihood of complaints being made when force has been used properly.

Using force

A panel of experts identified that certain restraint techniques presented an **unacceptable risk** when used on children and young people. The techniques in question are:

- The 'seated double embrace' which involves two members of staff forcing a person into a sitting position and leaning them forward, while a third monitors breathing;
- The 'double basket-hold' which involves holding a person's arms across their chest; and
- The 'nose distraction technique' which involves a sharp upward jab under the nose.

Staff training

Schools need to take their own decisions about staff training. The Principal should consider whether members of staff require any additional training to enable them to carry out their responsibilities and should consider the needs of the pupils when doing so. Some local authorities provide advice and guidance to help schools to develop an appropriate training programme.

Telling parents when force has been used on their child

It is good practice for schools to speak to parents about serious incidents involving the use of force and to consider how best to record such serious incidents. It is up to schools to decide whether it is appropriate to report the use of force to parents. In deciding what a serious incident is, teachers should use their professional judgement and also consider the following:

- The pupil's behaviour and level of risk presented at the time of the incident

- The degree of force used
- The effect on the pupil or member of staff
- The child's age

What happens if a pupil complains when force is used on them?

i. All complaints about the use of force should be thoroughly, speedily and appropriately investigated.
ii. Where a member of staff has acted within the law – that is, they have used reasonable force in order to prevent injury, damage to property or disorder – this will provide a defence to any criminal prosecution or other civil or public law action.
iii. When a complaint is made the onus is on the person making the complaint to prove that his/her allegations are true – it is **not** for the member of staff to show that he/she has acted reasonably.
iv. Suspension should not be an automatic response when a member of staff has been accused of using excessive force. Schools should refer to the "Dealing with Allegations of Abuse against Teachers and Other Staff" guidance where an allegation of using excessive force is made against a teacher. This guidance makes clear that a person must not be suspended automatically, or without careful thought.
v. Schools must consider carefully whether the circumstances of the case warrant a person being suspended until the allegation is resolved or whether alternative arrangements are more appropriate.
vi. If a decision is taken to suspend a teacher, the school should ensure that the teacher has access to a named contact who can provide support.
vii. Governing bodies should always consider whether a teacher has acted within the law when reaching a decision on whether or not to take disciplinary action against the teacher.
viii. As employers, schools and local authorities have a duty of care towards their employees. It is important that schools provide appropriate pastoral care to any member of staff who is subject to a formal allegation following a use of force incident.

What about other physical contact with pupils?

It is not illegal to touch a pupil. There are occasions when physical contact, other than reasonable force, with a pupil is proper and necessary. Examples of where touching a pupil might be proper or necessary:

- When comforting a distressed pupil;
- When a pupil is being congratulated or praised;
- To demonstrate how to use a musical instrument;
- To demonstrate exercises or techniques during PE lessons or sports coaching; and
- To give first aid.

Frequently Asked Questions

I'm worried that if I use force a pupil or parent could make a complaint against me. Am I protected?
Yes, if you have acted lawfully. If the force used is reasonable all staff will have a robust defence against any accusations.

How do I know whether using a physical intervention is 'reasonable'?
The decision on whether to physically intervene is down to the professional judgement of the teacher concerned. Whether the force used is reasonable will always depend on the particular circumstances of the case. The use of force is reasonable if it is proportionate to the consequences it is intended to prevent. This means the degree of force used should be no more than is needed to achieve the desired result.

What about school trips?
The power may be used where the member of staff is lawfully in charge of the pupils, and this includes while on school trips.

Can force be used on pupils with SEN or disabilities?
Yes, but the judgement on whether to use force should not only depend on the circumstances of the case but also on information and understanding of the needs of the pupil concerned.

I'm a female teacher with a Year 10 class - there's no way I'd want to restrain or try to control my pupils. Am I expected to do so?
There is a power, not a duty, to use reasonable force so members of staff have discretion whether or not to use it. However, teachers and other school staff have a duty of care towards their pupils and it might be argued that failing to take action (including a failure to use reasonable force) may in some circumstances breach that duty.

Are there any circumstances in which a teacher can use physical force to punish a pupil?
No. It is always unlawful to use force as a punishment. This is because it would fall within the definition of corporal punishment, which is illegal.

Associated Resources

The latest DfE guidance can be found here:

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/use-of-reasonable-force-in-schools